00036983

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

Royal Asiatic Society.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

Marguerite de Valois.

Queen of France

from Cartons d'Estampes de la Bibliothèque de Ste Geneviève

HENRY IV

AND

MARIE DE MEDICI.

PART II.

OF

THE HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF HENRY IV.

KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE.

FROM NUMEROUS UNPUBLISHED SOURCES,
INCLUDING MS. DOCUMENTS IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE IMPÉRIALE,
AND THE ARCHIVES DU ROYAUME DE FRANCE, ETC.

36983

BY

MARTHA WALKER FREER,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF MARGUERITE D'ANGOULÊME," "JEANNE D'ALBRET,"
"ELIZABETH DE VALOIS AND THE COURT OF PHILIP II.,"
"HENRY III., KING OF FRANCE," ETC.

"A cœur vaillant rien d'impossible."—LEGENDE DE HENRI IV.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1861.

The right of Translation is reserved.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY R. BORN, GLOUCESTER STREET,
REGENT'S PARK.

CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME THE FIRST.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

1594—1595.

Henri Quatre in Paris—Gabrielle d'Estrées—Condition of parties in the capital—Prosecution against the Jesuits——Madame Catherine—Her attachment to M. de Soissons—Madame resigns the promise of marriage interchanged between herself and the Count de Soissons—Details—Attachment of Madame to the Protestant Faith—The duke de Bouillon—Religious broils of the Court—Demise of MM. de Revol and D'O—Changes in the ministry—Villeroy appointed secretary of state—Feud between M. de Sancy and Madame de Monceaux—The duke de Mayenne at Brussels—Details—Propositions of the Spanish cabinet—Reply of M. de Mayenne—Submission of the duke de Guise—The king confirms the Edict of Poitiers—Fêtes of the Court—Baptism of the son of Madame de Sourdis—Madame de Montpensier—Departure of the king for Picardy—His return to St. Germain—Attempt of Châtel to assassinate the king—Sentence on the criminal—He implicates the Jesuits—Third prosecution instituted against the Order—Decree of exile is pronounced—Sensation in Rome—Interview of d'Ossat with Clement VIII.—Te Deum is chanted for his majesty's happy escape from assassination—Henry proceeds to Notre Dame in state—Chapter of the Order of St. Esprit—Recognition of the royal rights by the clergy of Paris—Henry renews his overtures to Rome—Satisfaction of the Supreme Pontiff—

Arrival of M. de Guise in Paris—Madame orders a ballet to celebrate the event—Seditious designs of the duke d'Epernon in Provence—Campaign in Picardy—Attitude of the duke de Mercœur—The dowager queen Louise de Lorraine offers her mediation—She journeys to Ancenis to meet M. de Mercœur, accompanied by envoys from Henry IV. 3

CHAPTER II.

1595.

Declaration of war against Spain—Debates in the States of Artois and Hainault—Commencement of hostilities—Retreat of Mayenne to Dijon—Cabals of the Privy-Council—Arrival of Ambassadors from Venice—Perparations for the Campaign in Burgundy—The king nominates a Council of Administration—Intrigues of M. de Soissons—Harangue of the Parliament of Paris—Reply made by the king—M. de Rosny—He is disliked and dreaded by the ministers and courtiers of the king—Departure of king Henry from Paris—His Arrival at Troyes—Defection of M de Soissons—The Constable of Castile invades Burgundy—Action of Fontaine Française—Details—Correspondence of the king—His Letter to Madame—Clemency of Henry IV.—He offers amnesty upon certain conditions to the duc de Mayenne—M. de Rosny retires from the Council of State—Affair of the Princesse de Condé—Campaign in Picardy—Capture of Ham—The duc d'Aumale—His trial before the Parliament of Paris—Sentenced to decapitation—Suspension of the edict—Combat of Dourlens—Victory declares for the Spaniards—Fall of the Admiral de Villars—Consternation of the royal generals—Aumale holds command in the army of Spain—Publication by the Parliament and Council of the decree of attainder—Execution of the sentence—Le Château d'Anet—Madame d'Aumale—The Chamber proposes the arraignment of the Chieftains of the League—Flight of Madame de Montpensier from Paris—She is protected by Madame—Negotiation for the submission of the duke de Mayenne—He solicits for the intercession of Gabrielle d'Estrées—Terms which he offers to the latter—Siege of Cambray—The Marshal de Balagny and his wife—They seek the protection of Madame de Monceaux—Fall of Cambray—Details 59

CHAPTER III.

1595—1596.

King Henry makes his entry into Lyons—Position of affairs in Rome—Clement VIII. and the cardinal d'Ossat—Du Perron, bishop elect of Evreux, is nominated to proceed to Rome and act in conjunction with d'Ossat—Cardinal Aldobrandini—Negotiations for the reconciliation of Henri Quatre with the Holy See—Details—Ceremonies of the Absolution of Henry IV.—Reception of the news in France —The war in Provence—Designs of the duke d'Epernon—Henry returns to Paris—Address of the Parliament—The count de Soissons and Madame—Broils between Henry and his sister—Henry takes the command of the army of Picardy —Position of affairs—Siege of la Fère—The camp of Traverey—Correspondence of Henry IV. with the Pope—Arrival of Condé at St. Germain—His household—Correspondence of the king with M. de Soissons—Sojourn of Henry IV. at Folembray—His treaty with the duke de Mayenne—Details—Siege of la Fère—Appointment of Albert archduke and cardinal to the viceroyalty of the Low Countries—Views of the Spanish court—Philip II. procures the release of the Cardinal Albert from his priestly vows, and betroths him to Doña Isabel—Entry of the Archduke into Brussels—Invasion of France by the Spaniards—They capture Calais—Embassy of Sancy to England—Propositions of Queen Elizabeth—Correspondence with the king—Negotiations for the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive between the crowns of England and France 109

CHAPTER IV.

1596.

Broils of the Council of State—Penury of the king—He summons M. de Rosny to conference at Amiens—Journey of Rosny thither with Gabrielle d'Estrées—Mission of M. de Rosny to the duke de Montpensier—He repairs to Fontainebleau—Stormy interview with Madame—Correspondence with the king—Capitulation of la Fère—The conditions—The duke d'Epernon and the war in Provence—He submits to the royal authority—Pestilence in Paris—Demise of the duchess

de Montpensier—The duke de Mayenne visits the king at Monceaux—Gabrielle d'Estrées—Arrival of the legate cardinal de Medici—Honours conferred upon him—Is met by the king at Chanteloup—His entry into Paris—Financial difficulties of the realm—M. de Rosny consulted thereon—Introduction of Rosny into the council—His mission to the Generalités—Henry visits the château de Gaillon—Admits to audience an envoy from Savoy—Assembly of Notables in Rouen—Queen Elizabeth sends the earl of Shrewsbury to invest the king with the Order of the Garter—Rosny is recalled from his mission—Feuds between MM. de Rosny and de Sancy—Opening of the assembly of Notables—Speech of Henri Quatre—Enthusiasm displayed—Birth of Henriette Catherine de Vendôme—Baptismal ceremonies—Betrothal of the young princess to the heir of Montmorency—Deliberations of the Notables—Le Conseil de Raison—Debates on the subject in council—Advice of M. de Rosny—Decree in favour of the princess de Condé—She renounces the reformed faith—Festivities at Rouen—Menaced rupture between the courts of England and France—Jealousy of Queen Elizabeth—Mission of MM. d'Ancel and de Bongars to the German courts—Foreign policy of Henri Quatre—Continued debates of the assembly at Rouen—The Notables present to the king the reports of the three Orders—Reply of Henry IV 177

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

1597.

Henri Quatre and Gabrielle d'Estrées—M. de Sancy—His imprudent speech—Jealous violence of the king—Attitude of queen Marguerite—Her reply to M. de Rosny on the matter of her divorce—Letter of queen Marguerite to Gabrielle d'Estrées—Pecuniary troubles of the queen—She borrows from the Venetian republic—Carnival of 1597—Madame Catherine—Banquet at the Hôtel Montmorency—The fall of Amiens—Details—Gallantry of the king—M. de Rosny and his financial projects—Consternation of the courtiers—Gabrielle d'Estrées retires from Paris to Monceaux

—Military designs of the king—Coldness of the English court—Anxiety and illness of king Henry—He proceeds to Monceaux—Measures of finance—The parliament offers factious opposition, and opposes the design of creating fresh offices in the courts of judicature—The members petition the king—Henry replies to the deputation—Seditious movements in the capital—Alienation between the king and Madame—Henry returns to the Louvre—Honours conferred on Gabrielle d'Estrées—The king repairs to La Chambre Dorée, and orders the registration of his edicts—Disaffection shown by the High Court—Siege of Amiens—The camp, and the arrival there of Gabrielle d'Estrées—She is created duchesse de Beaufort—Her unpopularity—Negotiation commenced by the Franciscan Calatagirone—Correspondence of Henry IV. with the duke de Piney Luxembourg—Attitude of Philip II.—March of the archduke viceroy—Albert menaces the royal camp before Amiens—His retreat—Correspondence of the king—His letter to M. de Crillon—Advances upon Dourlens—Death of M. de St. Luc—The post of grand-master of artillery bestowed on the marquis de Cœuvres—Surrender of Amiens—Clemency of Henri Quatre—His interview with the marquis de Montenegro—Negotiation proceeds for the ratification of peace—Correspondence of the king with his ambassador in Rome—Anger of queen Elizabeth at these overtures—Henry visits Monceaux and Fontainebleau—Assault on M. de Mornay by the marquis de. St. Phal—Sympathy of the king—He orders the arrest and punishment of M. de St. Phal, ... 239

CHAPTER II.

1598.

Paris on New Year's Day, 1598—Position of the realm—Duke de Mercœur and the affairs of Bretagne—Correspondence of king Henry with the queen—Conference on the frontier—Details, and subsequent negotiations with queen Elizabeth and the States of Holland—Desire of Philip II. for peace—The duke de Mercœur—His pretensions—Conferences of Chenonceau in 1596—Campaign in Bretagne—Henry leads his army—He is accompanied by Madame la Duchesse—Royal progress—Visit to queen Louise—The court at Plessis les Tours—The dukes de Bouillon et de la Tremouille salute

the king—Attitude of Henry's Huguenot subjects—Duke and duchesse de Mercœur seek the intercession of the duchesse de Beaufort—Their perilous position—They offer their daughter's hand to César-Monsieur—Negotiation—Arrival of the king at Pont de Cé—Madame de Mercœur presents herself to ask the royal clemency—The king appoints a commission to consider the conditions to be imposed on M. de Mercœur—Submission of the Duchy of Bretagne—Joy of the people to salute their king—Gabrielle d'Estrées presents madame de Mercœur to the king—Edict of amnesty—Arrival of M. de Mercœur at Angers—Betrothal of Françoise de Lorraine with the young duke de Vendôme—Marriage contract and festivities—Correspondence of the king with Montmorency—Birth of Alexandre Chevalier de Vendôme—Conferences of the Protestants—Ambassadors from the queen of England and the States of Holland repair to confer with the king at Nantes—Purport of their mission, and its results—Edict of Nantes—Details of the conferences—Negotiations at Vervins for the conclusion of peace between the crowns of France and Spain—Politic conduct of the cardinal legate—Correspondence of king Henry with queen Elizabeth—Henry confides to Rosny his intention to espouse Madame la Duchesse—Grief of Rosny—Opinion of the courtiers on the elevation of Gabrielle d'Estrées—Her deportment—Dissensions between Madame and the king—Henry resolves to bestow the hand of his sister on the duke de Bar—Peace is concluded at Vervins—The treaty—Entry of the Spanish ambassage into Paris—Magnificence and *fêtes* of the court—Ceremonies in Notre Dame—The duchesse de Beaufort—Her residence in the Louvre—Embassy of the duke de Biron to Brussels—The peace of Vervins is confirmed by Philip II. and the Archduke Viceroy—Munificence of the latter—Biron confers with Louis Picotte, dit d'Orleans, a renegade monk and leaguer—Restoration of the islands of d'If and de Pomègues to the crown of France by the grand duke of Tuscany—Displeasure of queen Elizabeth at the peace of Vervins—She persists in her hostility against Spain—Discussions relative to the royal divorce—Henry consults Rosny, Villeroy, and Sillery—Alliance of Madame with the duke de Bar—Her marriage contract—She visits Monceaux—Partial reconciliation of Madame with Gabrielle d'Estrées 301

BOOK IV.

HENRY IV.

AND

MARIE DE MEDICI.

CHAPTER I.

1594—1595.

Henri Quatre in Paris—Gabrielle d'Estrées—Condition of parties in the capital—Prosecution against the Jesuits——Madame Catherine—Her attachment to M. de Soissons—Madame resigns the promise of marriage interchanged between herself and the Count de Soissons—Details—Attachment of Madame to the Protestant Faith—The duke de Bouillon—Religious broils of the Court—Demise of MM. de Revol and D'O—Changes in the ministry—Villeroy appointed secretary of state—Feud between M. de Sancy and Madame de Monceaux—The duke de Mayenne at Brussels—Details—Propositions of the Spanish cabinet—Reply of M. de Mayenne—Submission of the duke de Guise—The king confirms the Edict of Poitiers—Fêtes of the Court—Baptism of the son of Madame de Sourdis—Madame de Montpensier—Departure of the king for Picardy—His return to St. Germain—Attempt of Châtel to assassinate the king—Sentence on the criminal—He implicates the Jesuits—Third prosecution instituted against the Order—Decree of exile is pronounced—Sensation in Rome—Interview of D'Ossat with Clement VIII.—Te

Deum is chanted for his majesty's happy escape from assassination—Henry proceeds to Notre Dame in state—Chapter of the Order of St. Esprit—Recognition of the royal rights by the clergy of Paris—Henry renews his overtures to Rome—Satisfaction of the supreme Pontiff—Arrival of M. de Guise in Paris—Madame orders a ballet to celebrate the event—Seditious designs of the duke d Epernon in Provence—Campaign in Picardy—Attitude of the duke de Mercœur—The dowager queen Louise de Lorraine offers her mediation—She journeys to Ancenis to meet M. de Mercœur, accompanied by envoys from Henry IV.

THE loyal enthusiasm of the people of Paris continued to be excited by the presence of Henri Quatre long after the entry of the king into his capital. The citizens watched with interest the re-assembling of the magnificent court of Henry III. The portals of the hôtels of the great nobles were gradually opened. The palaces occupied during the rebellion by order of the Supreme Council of Union were restored to their owners, all dilapidations being nominally defrayed by mandates on the treasure chests of the Hôtel de Ville.

The day following the entry of the king into Paris, he presented the hôtel Schomberg to Madame de Monceaux, a donation which excited comment, and much animadversion. The beauty and patronizing airs of Madame Gabrielle astonished the Parisians, who beheld the sister of their sovereign eclipsed even in the halls of the Louvre by the magnificence of the favourite. The honours given to a dauphin of France were lavished on the infant son of the latter, who was alluded to by his majesty under the appellation of Monsieur.[1] Soon after the establishment

[1] To which the courtiers ingeniously attached his name, so that the little prince was always called César-Monsieur.

of the court in Paris, a Genevese printer named Chuppin, calling at one of the government offices which were situated in a wing of the Louvre, was attracted by a crowd of persons before the grand portal of the palace, waiting, as he believed, to cheer the king. In a few minutes, however, the palace guards presented arms, and a lady magnificently arrayed, followed by a train of pages and gentlemen, issued from the palace, and was handed into a coach emblazoned with the royal badge and cipher. Dazzled by the beauty of the lady, and at the homage which her appearance elicited, Chuppin asked a sentinel on guard whether queen Marguerite had taken up her abode at the Louvre with her royal consort? "Mon ami," replied the soldier, amused at the rustic simplicity of Chuppin, who, following the general example, had reverently doffed his cap, "do not excite yourself. The great lady you have seen is great only in her own esteem. She is the king's mistress!"[1]

The king also bestowed upon Gabrielle d'Estrées the revenues of the abbey of St. Cornouaille de Compiègne—a benefice which appertained to queen Marguerite. The queen silently endured this usurpation of her privilege; but a few weeks subsequently, the bishopric of Condom lapsing, Marguerite wrote to the king requesting him to bestow the see upon the brother of one M. de Mourave,[2] an adherent of her own, as he had been pleased summarily to dispose of St. Cornouaille.

[1] Journal du Règne de Henri IV.—Lestoile, année 1594.

[2] "M. de Mourave, chef de mon conseil à Toulouse."—The brother of M. de Mourave was Bertier, Syndic of the Gallican Church.

"Monseigneur, when you were pleased to present my abbey of St. Cornouaille to Madame la Marquise de Monceaux, in defiance of my right and privilege of nomination, I offered no objection; as it is a real pleasure to me to give that good woman some appropriate token of benevolence; and to demonstrate my determination to favour all whom you may love."[1] After this preamble, Marguerite prefers her request, which, as may be supposed, was not granted; the bishopric of Condom being bestowed on a relative of Gabrielle, whom she herself presented to his majesty.

Henry, meantime, continued to hold council in the Louvre. The task of purging the capital from seditious brawlers proceeded with rigour. The monasteries had now become the principal resort of the disaffected. There the late favoured orators of the Parisian league continued their cabals; and from the monastic pulpits the curés of the capital yet poured forth malevolent abuse. The brunt of the inquisition commanded by the council into the condition of the monasteries of Paris fell on the Jesuits. The fathers had long been in bad odour.[2] The people remembered the grudging aids doled forth by Tyrius at the period of the direst public need. The government dreaded the keen pens and sharp wits of the fathers; and deprecated the growth of the Jesuit seminaries. It was therefore gladly remem-

[1] Au Roy Monseigneur—B. Imp. F. Dupuy, fol. 217, MS. Guessard—Lettres de Marguerite de Valois.

[2] The first process against the Jesuits in France was instituted thirty years previously. The University and the Government ever beheld the growth of the Society with jealousy and distrust.

bered that during the siege of Paris, when the ravages of famine compelled the duke de Nemours to accept contributions from the treasuries of the churches, and to melt down a portion of the regalia of France, a fine ruby, two sapphires, and eight large emeralds had been pledged to the Jesuits. The Prevôt de l' Hôtel, Lugoli, was therefore authorized to demand these jewels, upon which, it was said, the community had advanced stores of grain and wine. The fathers resorted to artifice to avoid restitution; and it was only after the menace of incarceration in the Bastille that any answer could be extorted.[1] As the fathers denied their liability and refused to restore the jewels deposited, a process was commenced, which was conducted on both sides with acrimonious rancour. The doings of the community during the siege of Paris; the seditious libels propagated; and the caricatures emanating from the pen of the fathers, in which Madame Gabrielle and the princess Catherine had been severely handled, were remorselessly exposed. The eloquence of the learned advocate Antoine Arnaud[2] was also enlisted to prove the complicity of the Jesuit fathers in the murder of Henry III., and in the scenes

[1] "Ce jour Lugoli, Prevôt de l'Hôtel, alla aux Jesuites leur demander un rubis qu'ils avaient des bagues de la couronne; et sur la difficulté qu'ils faisaient de s'assembler pour y adviser, ayant dejà eté plusieurs fois interpellez de faire reponse, leur dit enfin que s'ils ne voulaient s'assembler chez eux, qu'il seroit contraint de les assembler en la Bastille."—Journal de Henri IV.

[2] Antoine Arnaud, a learned and eloquent advocate. He espoused the daughter of the attorney-general, Marion. Henri IV. created Arnaud a counsellor of state. During the regency of Marie de Medici he became attorney-general. Arnaud was the father of the celebrated Mère Angelique, Abbess of Port

which subsequently disgraced Paris. Above all, it was alleged that Barrière imbibed his regicidal inspirations in the Rue St. Antoine. Whilst this suit was pending, various other edicts were issued, and local dues re-imposed. All pamphlets were subjected to severe censorship; placards were prohibited; and political harangues of every description interdicted. A solemn requiem was said for the soul of the late president de Brisson, at Notre Dame, which the parliament attended in state. Henry showed himself constantly to the people; he dined in public, and played daily at tennis with the cavaliers of his court. The merry and sanguine temper of the king cheered all who approached him. As of yore his *bon-mots* and tact smoothed difficulties, and enabled Henry at all times to maintain his dignity. It was observed, however, that his majesty's tone grew more peremptory—a change ascribed to the counsels of Rosny and Madame de Monceaux.

Madame, meanwhile, took up her residence in queen Catherine's former abode, the Hôtel de Soissons. Every evening the princess held her court at the Louvre, attended by her *coterie* of Huguenot ladies, over which Madame de Guiche and the duchess de Rohan presided. The deportment of Madame afforded her brother little satisfaction. The princess participated in the festivities of the Louvre, with the air of a person who tolerates that which she cannot approve. Her ladies united in reprobating the prevailing licence; and expatiated on the want of decorum evinced by his majesty in permitting the pre-

Royal. The Arnauds were of a noble house of Auvergne. "Arnaud parla pour l'Université; Dollé pour les *curés*, et Durêt pour les Jésuites."—Hist. de l'Université de Paris, t. 6.

sence of Gabrielle d'Estrées in the circle of the princess. The grievance, however, which kept Madame hostile and sullen was the pertinacious refusal of the king to sanction her engagement to the count de Soissons; and her resentment at the dishonourable expedient adopted to obtain possession of the promise of marriage which she had exchanged with her lover. Before the entry of the king into Paris he had commissioned M. de Rosny to accomplish this delicate service—one the more difficult to achieve from the well-known obstinacy of Madame. Rosny in vain attempted excuses, being reluctant to compromise himself with the princess by abetting the deceit which Henry proposed. On the express mandate of the king, however, Rosny obeyed; he being also convinced that while acting for the welfare of the realm, he was serving Madame by emancipating her from the baneful influence of M. de Soissons.

Du Perron,[1] bishop of Evreux, had a younger brother who had lately sought to advance his fortunes by assiduous court to Madame. Rosny, therefore, in pursuance of his project, made sundry friendly overtures to this young cavalier, which so elated the latter that he was ready to believe every word spoken by his new patron. One day Rosny confessed under the seal of secrecy, "that in reality his majesty was not so averse as he seemed to the alliance of Madame with the count de Soissons; only that he could not pardon the deceit which she had prac-

[1] The true name of the bishop and his brother was Davy, or David. They were the sons of a Huguenot minister, who inhabited for some time the Rue du Perron of Geneva, and assumed the name. When elevated to the cardinalate Du Perron pretended that his patronymic was spelled d'Avit.

tised: nevertheless, he (M. de Rosny) deemed the affair to be one of easy adjustment." Madame at this period was sojourning at Chartres; but a missive from M. du Perron, as Rosny intended, apprized Madame de Guiche of this unexpected mutation in his majesty's hitherto resolute will. The delight of the princess and her lover was indescribable. Madame, therefore, from regarding Rosny as the stern and uncompromising agent of the king, began to view him with complacency, as a medium through which this much-desired alliance might be concluded. Some three days subsequently M. de Rosny journeyed to Chartres from Rouen, in which latter place he was engaged in negotiating with Villars for the surrender of that city. A visit to Madame was of course the necessary preliminary to a sojourn at Chartres. Rosny was received with *empressement* by the countess de Guiche, and immediately conducted into the presence of Madame, whom he found conversing with M. de Soissons. "Madame, I bring to your presence one who has the will, as well as the power, to serve you in that which you have most at heart!" exclaimed Madame de Guiche. Madame modestly replied, addressing Rosny, "that all the world knew the fidelity of her attachment to M. le comte de Soissons; and that if M. de Rosny could aid her to perfect his reconciliation with the king her brother, she would feel eternally obliged."

M. de Soissons then uttered a few flattering words to the effect, that "no one doubted the diplomatic acquirements of M. de Rosny, who achieved all that he willed." Rosny then commenced an address to his eager listeners, in which he dwelt on the pain inflicted on the fraternal heart of Henry

by Madame's project of a clandestine alliance; and by her subsequent declaration of independence. He then stated, in reply to the questions put to him, "that his majesty being now firmly established in his realm, had not the same political objection as of yore to his sister's marriage with M. de Soissons. Nevertheless, he ventured to assure their Highnesses, as one well versed in the royal sentiments, that the inevitable preliminary to the realization of their desire would be to submit to his majesty's pleasure, by sacrificing the promise of marriage which they had undutifully exchanged; besides appending their signatures to a document stating their intention to abide by the royal decision." [1] The duke de Sully, in his memoirs, owns to some compunction in having condescended to so flagitious a falsehood; but exonerates his conscience, on the purity of his motives, the welfare of the kingdom, and the personal benefit of the princess. Madame then warily asked if it were true that M. de Montpensier was affianced to mademoiselle de Joyeuse; and whether the treaty with the duke de Lorraine[2] was progressing satisfactorily?

Rosny answered these questions in the affirmative, and added other arguments tending to confirm his assurances.[3] The countess de Guiche then

[1] Rosny said:—"Qu'il pensait pouvoir leur assurer qu'après cette complaisance, il ne se passerait pas trois mois, sans qu'ils vissent le roy prevenir lui même leurs désirs, et cimenter leur union."—Sully, liv. 6.

[2] Madame had been informed that the duke de Lorraine demanded her hand for his son, the duke de Bar, as one of the conditions of the treaty.

[3] "On n'eut aucune peine à me croire," writes M. de Rosny, with the utmost complacency.

stated, that the written promise of marriage given by Soissons to Madame had been safely deposited among the archives of Grammont, in the château de la Bidache. Rosny subsequently retired, with the air of a man who had tendered his best counsel, the adoption of which he left to the wisdom of his hearers. After the lapse of a few days his crafty scheme bore its anticipated fruit. The princess sent Rosny the promise of marriage given her by Soissons to deliver to the king, as "a pledge of her affection, confidence, and submission!" Madame, moreover, signed and sealed a document in conjunction with Soissons, in which the royal pair mutually released each other from promise or contract, and consented to abide by his majesty's decision relative to their proposed alliance.[1] The princess, on delivering this paper, exacted a promise that, though its contents might be perused by the king, the document was not to be relinquished by M. de Rosny—an engagement to which the latter states that he faithfully adhered. After so notable a concession, Madame and her lover reasonably expected tokens of royal *bienveillance* and sanction. In reply to his sister's importunities, Henry, however, again peremptorily recommended the suit of the Duke de Montpensier; or, in default of such alliance, he signified his resolve to grant her hand to M. de Bar. In vain Madame demanded explanations, and indignantly reproached Rosny: the latter replied by pleading the express commands of his master,, and thereby excused his duplicity. From this period Madame,

[1] L'Acte de renonciation de leurs promesses mutuelles de Madame sœur du Roy, et de Monseigneur Charles de Bourbon, comte de Soissons.

incensed at the ungenerous device to which she had been subjected, maintained the driest reserve; and demonstrated no inclination for the renewal of confidential intercourse with her brother. The count de Soissons also adopted a frigid disdain of manner, which, if Henry had been securely seated on his throne, might have been atoned for in the Bastille.

Neither menace nor persuasion, however, could now move the resolve of Madame to remain faithful to the count; meantime she solaced her chagrin by religious austerity. Madame permitted her ministers Cayet and La Faye to preach within the precincts of the Louvre, and ordered that the portals of her chapel should be open to all comers. The remnant of the great Huguenot confederation rallied round the princess in the very capital, to the intense annoyance of the king. The duke de Bouillon, who — despite the love and loyalty which he at this time felt for Henri Quatre—rejoiced to afflict his royal master by petty cabals, daily attended Madame's *prêche*. The duchess de Rohan, Madame de Guiche, Mesdames de Pangeas and de Pardaillan —ladies, the immediate intimates of the princess—increased the unpopularity of their mistress by imprudent boastings. The orthodox Parisians, who had endured the last straits of misery supported by the proud consciousness that they were martyrs to the Faith, beheld in amazement the desecration, as they termed it, of the Louvre. Henry himself was profoundly chagrined. To reason with Madame was of no avail. Rosny's sharp irony was useless. Madame could scarce find language vivid enough to express her animosity; while she ironically commented on the "cautious art" of M. de Rosny,

who, when in Paris, never attended any religious worship whatever, except when he accompanied his majesty to hear a state sermon at Notre Dame.

For the first few weeks after Henry's entry into Paris the prelates and clergy dissembled their indignation at the proceedings of the princess. On Sunday September 9th, however, Madame commanded the marriage of mademoiselle d'Andelot with the marquis de Mirabeau to be solemnized in full *prêche*. The hall of the Louvre was crowded with curious spectators. The bride sat at the right of Madame, and listened with exemplary attention to the discourse of the officiating minister. In consequence of these proceedings, the archbishop of Paris Gondy, and a deputation of ecclesiastics, waited upon the king, to remonstrate on the impolitic conduct of Madame; and especially that she brought her ministers to the Louvre, when her highness had a separate abode. "Sire, such proceedings here in your palace, in the heart of your capital, will alienate your subjects, and seriously retard that event we ardently pray for—the reconciliation of your majesty and of this realm to the Holy See." "Monseigneur," hotly rejoined Henry, "if you deem it strange that my sister prays in the Louvre, I think it still more strange that in this said Louvre, my own abode, you presume to hold such language relative to Madame!" The cardinal, in extenuation, then ventured to allude to the marriage of mademoiselle d'Andelot, which he branded as illegal and void. Henry impatiently stepped from the dais, saying, "*Qu'on ne m'en parle plus!*"[1]

Many were the annoyances which the king was yet to experience from the ill-judging zeal with

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1594.

which Madame upheld her faith. The remonstrances of the prelates resulted in a prohibition against heretical assemblages in the Louvre; accompanied by an order limiting the number of admissions to the private chapel of Madame to the personages of her household, and to the duke de Bouillon.

About this period death deprived the king of the services of the secretary-of-state, Revol,[1] whose steady application to business, and knowledge from long tenure of office, rendered his co-operation in affairs invaluable. M. d'O, Henry's minister of finance, at the same time fell dangerously ill. Henry showed great regret at the demise of Revol, whom he termed "a faithful servant and a conscientious man." "As for my other secretaries," exclaimed his majesty, "one is a boaster, the other is a fool, and the third is a thief!"[2]

The confusion in the cabinet at this period was overwhelming: the feuds between the king's principal officers, and the illness of Revol and d'O, who alone of the council managed to agree, produced serious complications. Public business was, in fact, transacted by Henry with his able coadjutors, Villeroy and Rosny. The latter held no place in the privy-council; while Villeroy, being fifth and supernumerary secretary of state, had entered the cabinet on sufferance only, until a vacancy occurred.

[1] "Il etoit homme de peu de montre, mais grand d'esprit, qui craignoit Dieu, et avait l'âme droite." Henry III. designated Revol, in his letters patent, "homme fidèle, de sainte vie, accoutumé a servir dès ses premières années." Revol died Saturday, September 17th, 1594.

[2] The three secretaries alluded to by the King were, Forget, Sieur Dufresne, a protégé of Madame de Monceaux; Martin de

The military operations before Laon, which Biron continued closely to invest, suffered much from these vexatious disputes. During the illness of Revol, which lasted a few days only, the king requested the count de Soissons to present two edicts to the Cour des Aides, in order to facilitate his pecuniary projects. The count ungraciously refused "to hazard his popularity by recommending the subsidy." The king, therefore, nominated M. de Montpensier to fulfil the mission, which the duke willingly undertook.

The appointment of Villeroy as secretary of state, in the room of Revol, meantime met with steady opposition. Madame wept, and deprecated the nomination of so noted a foe to reform. Diane de France duchesse d'Angoulême, and queen Louise, forwarded protests, "inasmuch as they held M. de Villeroy guilty of the crime of regicide, in the same degree as Chapelle-Marteau." Rosny, jealous of the ascendancy already obtained by the shrewd Villeroy, preserved gloomy silence; while Beaulieu, upon whom the chief burden of affairs during the war had fallen, bitterly complained that, after all his faithful services, M. de Villeroy, a renegade from the League, was to be placed over him as chief secretary. Henry, nevertheless, remained firm against solicitation. "I know what I am about," said his majesty; "I have proved Villeroy, and know how to use him. There is no man in the realm more indispensable to my government than this said Villeroy."[1] Seven days after the demise of

Ruzé, Sieur de Beaulieu, a clever plodder; and Louis Potier, who distinguished himself in the prosecution and trial of the Marshal de Biron.

[1] Vie de M. de Villeroy—par le P. Mathieu. Journal de Henri IV. Mathieu.

Revol, M. de Villeroy therefore received his patent as minister of the crown. Subsequently, the tact of Villeroy obviated much hostile conflict. A few visits to Madame la Marquise, to whom Villeroy paid intense deference; and the assumption towards his opponents of the council of a manner cordial, and apparently utterly unsuspicious of their late bad offices, and the clever secretary was firmly installed in power.

Towards the end of October, M. d'O died from maladies brought on by his profligate life. His death excited few regrets—his administration had been ruinous; and his malversations notorious. Flippant, impious, and unscrupulous, d'O had risen during the late reign, when the most daring enemy of the power and policy of the house of Lorraine found greatest favour in the sight of Henry III. Once the bosom friend of Epernon, d'O separated his policy from that of the duke, when the latter decided on his retreat to Angoulême from the camp of St. Cloud. In the council the half-surly, half-jocose temper of d'O created confusion; and often business was arrested by his altercations with Bouillon and Rosny, the latter of whom he hated as a Huguenot and an intruder. His ribald wit offended Madame, who censured his luxury, to which she said, "that, even of the glutton Apicius afforded no parallel." This extravagance ruined M. d'O; who, from being the reputed possessor of four millions sterling, died, while bailiffs seized the rich furniture in his official residence as governor of Paris, the Hôtel de Ville. Seguier, dean of Notre Dame, ministered to his last moments. When all was over, the president Seguier, who had been also summoned to witness

and sign the testament of the deceased, exclaimed, "See! all of you here present lay to your hearts that which you now witness. Behold the body of him who three days ago revelled in luxuries, and governed France! Alas! where is he now?"[1]

The post of minister of finance lapsed by the demise of M. d'O. The king attempted to prefer Rosny to that office; but was deterred by the opposition of the council, the members of which feared the latter for his integrity; and feigned to ignore his illustrious lineage, as head of the house of Béthune. The dexterity and capacity of Rosny were dreaded by the majority of the privy-councillors. Finding it then impossible to promote his favourite, Henry proposed M. de Sancy, whose services in the levy of mercenary troops during the late wars merited, his majesty said, reward.

Sancy, however, had offended Gabrielle d'Estrées by his coarse mirth; and by his malicious practice of alluding to the scandals once prevalent respecting her *liaison* with the duke de Bellegarde. His insinuations respecting the birth of her little César were of a nature not to be pardoned by Gabrielle, who intended that the crown of France should circle her brow.[2] Madame la Marquise, therefore, exacted from the king a promise that Sancy,

[1] De Thou.—liv. 110. Aubigné, liv. 3—"M. le Grand (duc de Bellegarde) son bon amy etait desespéré de sa mort, comme d'O lui bailloit tous les ans 100,000 francs a dependre. Madame de Monceaux le pleura, pour ce qu'elle en faisoit ce qu'elle voulait. M. de Crillon dit à une dame, 'Madame, a l'heure que je parle, le pauvre d'O vient de rendre l'âme à tous les diables!'"

[2] Sancy, however, was countenanced in his damaging *bons mots* by Madame, who, when she first saw the infant César, exclaimed, "Comme l'enfant est gros pour le temps—il vivra,

"her enemy," should not be promoted to the treasury. After much discussion, the king therefore determined to suppress the office of superintendent of finance, and nominate instead a commission, composed of the following personages:—the chancellor Cheverny, the duke de Nevers, MM. de Bellièvre, Schomberg, de Maisse, de Fresne, la Grange, and de Sancy. During Henry's absence from Paris M. de Nevers was to have the casting vote in case of differences—a privilege due to his military services. "The king," says Rosny, "obligingly intimated to me, that again, to his very great regret, he was compelled to delay his recognition of my merits. I was content, however, to wait; having a post of under-secretary of state, with a salary of 2000 livres, to which his majesty at this period added a pension of 3000 livres."[1]

The dukes de Mayenne and d'Aumale, during these transactions, enacted the undignified *rôle* of suppliants at the court of the Archduke Ernest,[2] Spanish viceroy of Flanders. Mayenne's political reverses, his military defeats, and the ruin which had befallen him, failed to convince him that he was not destined to become the regenerator of France; or to bestow upon his country a fresh dynasty. Personally the duke piqued himself on feeling the greatest reverence for Henri IV.; but

car sans doute il est à terme!" The wit of the princess consisted in a play on the word "terme," as the second title of the duke de Bellegarde was Baron de Termes.—MS. Bibl. Imp. R. Conrart.

[1] Liv. 6. The under-secretaries of state had no seat in the council, and performed very subordinate offices.

[2] Brother of the Emperor Rodolph, and nephew of Philip II.

deemed it a sacred duty to denounce and, if possible, depose a sovereign whose throne was still unsanctified by the benison of Rome. In vain Madame de Montpensier spoke vehemently in support of the royal claims of Henry, as she had before denounced his rights. She appealed to the popular will, so resolutely evinced by the cession of town after town; and by the submission of the principal lords of the league. "His Holiness awaits only a little more cajolery, and a few concessions, to proclaim Le Béarnois his well-beloved son, and the faithful defender of the Holy See! The health of the king of Spain is failing—and believe me, monseigneur, his Catholic majesty, having now lost hope of the accession of Doña Isabel, will not ruin his realm for your private benefit!" said Madame de Montpensier. Villeroy also wrote continually, bewailing Mayenne's folly; and increasing the disquietude of the duke by subtle reports of the irritability of retort now displayed by the king whenever the late leaders of the Holy League were mentioned. Madame de Mayenne, and her children by her former marriage,[1] clamorously urged the expediency of concession; for the ban of outlawry was vividly present in the imagination of the duchess. The attitude of the Spanish court, also, was the reverse of encouraging; and, in fact, Mayenne narrowly escaped arrest by the archduke, and an ignominious voyage to Madrid, to answer in person the accusations of the duke de Feria.[2]

[1] The duchess de Mayenne was the widow of Melchior des Prez, Seigneur de Montpezat, son of Marshal de Montpezat.

[2] De Thou., liv. iii. Coloma, Historia de las Guerras de los Estados Baxos, libro 2. Cabrera, Vida de Don Felipe II.

When the duke quitted Paris on the 6th of March 1594, he repaired to Soissons; and from thence journeyed to Brussels. After the arrival of the Spanish ambassadors Feria, Mendoza, and Taxis, on their expulsion from Paris, the former wrote his letter of acrimonious invective to Philip II.[1] At the same time Feria urged the viceroy to seize the person of Mayenne; and to retain him prisoner until he had repaid to his Catholic majesty the immense sums which he had squandered, or diverted from the purposes for which the money was granted. "This said duke is an incarnation of fraud, trickery, and dissimulation; he frustrated the pious endeavours of Landriano and Séga, cardinal legates, to procure the election of an orthodox king; and he has connived at the late shameful secessions from the cause of the Union." This violent counsel was rejected by the archduke, though its expediency was twice debated in council. The perpetration of so flagrant a breach of hospitality, it was felt, would for ever destroy the *prestige* of Spain; besides converting the princes of Lorraine into determined foes. Mayenne was, therefore, soothed, cajoled, and encouraged to persevere in his pious scruples. The archduke, moreover, promised to send a succour of 7,000 infantry under count Mansfeld, in case Le Béarnnois should besiege the town of Laon; whither Mayenne proposed to retire, in order to recruit, and if possible re-organize his party. When Laon, however, was invested by Biron, Mayenne fled to La Fère, and joined the Spanish division, which appeared on the frontier. The army of king Henry performed valiant exploits

[1] See 1st part of this work—History of the Reign of Henry IV., vol. 2, bk. 3, chap. 4.

in repeated skirmishes and assaults on the camp of the invaders. The siege of Laon terminated by the surrender of the place, July 2nd, 1594. This triumph was followed by the retreat of the Spanish division over the frontier, after a sharp conflict at St. Gobin, a league from La Fère. During this campaign Henry lost several valiant officers, amongst whom was M. de Givry, and the young Marquis de Cœuvres, brother of Gabrielle d'Estrées. The king made his triumphal entry into Laon, Amiens, Beauvais; and finally, as has been related, entered Paris on the 15th of September. Mayenne then returned to Brussels to confer on the means of carrying on the war; his stolid resolve, that prominent trait in the duke's character, not the least subdued by repeated reverse. One of Mayenne's first measures was to open communications with the duke d'Epernon, whose conduct in Provence was beginning to excite distrust in the royal mind. The appointment of Villeroy as secretary of war was skilfully used by Mayenne to increase the disaffection of M. d'Epernon, who never deemed his own services sufficiently appreciated. The broils of the latter with Villeroy during the reign of Henry III. were notorious.[1] No abuse or personal reprisals had been deemed too degrading by these bitter foes. The duke, therefore, exhibited to the haughty Epernon the most mortifying picture of his position at the court of Henri Quatre—eclipsed in military affairs by Nevers, Bouillon, and Biron; and superseded in the council by Villeroy, and by the

[1] Henry III., his Court and Times, vol. iii. p. 73.—Epernon asserted that Villeroy was "a scoundrel, who deserved to be driven from office by the spurs of his majesty's guards!"

upstart Baron de Rosny! Having thus, as he hoped, kindled the flame of rebellion in the south, Mayenne boldly presented conditions to the Spanish council. He proposed that the king of Spain should be proclaimed Protector of the realm of France, until the election of a king, chosen and approved by his said majesty and by the Pope. That he (Mayenne) should retain the title and fulfil the functions of Lieutenant-General of the realm of France; with the right of nominating to the command of towns and fortresses. The duke stipulated that the king of Spain should levy an army of 16,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry; and, moreover, pay a body of 2,000 French infantry and 500 horse; and furnish a reserve of 4,000 men—this latter force to be defrayed by contribution. He asked that the duchy of Burgundy should be the reward of his recognition of the rights of the Infanta; nevertheless, if eventually it was found impossible to maintain these said rights, his Catholic majesty should settle lands in Flanders or elsewhere on himself and his posterity, to the amount of 100,000 crowns annually. Mayenne added, that if these propositions were rejected, he took God to witness that he had fulfilled his duty; and had achieved all in his power for the triumph of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Faith. The Flemish council made answer: "That his Catholic majesty intended to carry on the war; that, as sovereign Protector of the League, his majesty demanded that the campaign in Poitou and Bretagne should be carried on under his direction; that he agreed that M. de Mayenne should retain his titles; but, as a guarantee that the said duke, as was reported, might not make composition with the prince of Béarn, the town of Soissons

must be ceded to Spain. Finally, in case the cabinet of Madrid entered into treaty with the said prince of Béarn—a project too chimerical and ridiculous to be seriously discussed—tender regard should be shown to obtain the rehabilitation of M. de Mayenne."[1] The duke bluntly returned response, "That he neither could nor desired to accept such preposterous articles as those contained in the document forwarded; and that he appealed to the king of Spain." Thereupon, the archduke and his counsellors, Feria, Taxis, and others, wrote a voluminous despatch to king Philip, setting forth at length the misdeeds of Mayenne; and demanding instructions. His Catholic majesty was apprized of the menaced submission of the young duke de Guise, through the pernicious counsels of his grandmother Madame de Nemours, and of his aunt, Madame de Montpensier, "that once bright and honoured genius;" though, if immediate succour could be obtained from Spain, the Guisard had promised to admit a garrison of 700 Spaniards into Rheims, in which city he then held command. Nevertheless, the writers of the missive admonished his majesty on the precarious condition of the affairs of the Union; and recorded their persuasion that MM. de Mayenne, Guise, and the other princes of Lorraine, had commenced to treat secretly with Le Béarnois, through the president Jeannin, and the princesses. The apprehension of the Spanish council was well founded. The duke de Guise earnestly desired reconciliation with the king. His envoys awaited Henri IV. in the Louvre,

[1] De Thou., liv. cxi. Cayet—Hist. de la Guerre sous Henri IV., ou Chronologie Novennaire. Herrera, Hist. de España. Cabrera, Felipe II.

on the evening of the king's triumphant progress through his capital, empowered to treat for the submission of their master; and for the restitution of the city of Rheims. Until after the retreat of Mansfeld, and the reduction of Laon, Henry had stipulated for unqualified submission; but, yielding at length to the solicitations of the duchess de Guise, his majesty consented to empower the duke de Retz, the chancellor Cheverny, and the secretary Beaulieu, to receive and discuss the duke's propositions. The bright eyes of Mademoiselle de Guise, also, had influence in deciding his majesty to show forbearance towards her brother; who, of all the leaders of the Confederation had most to allege in extenuation of his revolt, while actually being one of the personages least compromised. The only recorded deed of violence perpetrated by Guise was his assassination of M. St. Paul, the notorious Leaguer, and self-constituted governor of Rheims. The duke, on the positive refusal of St. Paul to obey his commands as governor of Champagne, avenged this contumacy by slaying him on the spot. It was said that the true object of contention between St. Paul and the duke de Guise was the possession of Rheims; which city both were eager to retain, each to be better enabled eventually to make terms with the government.[1]

The conferences between the agents of the duke and the king's envoys commenced at the beginning of November, 1594. Guise demanded restitution of the government of Champagne, bestowed upon his grandfather by Francis I., but which Henry IV. had given to the duke de Nevers.

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov.

Many other impediments were raised—some by the royal commissioners; others by the duke's preposterous instructions. The conferences, therefore, closed with an intimation that the submission of M. de Guise must be unconditional.[1] The grief of the duchess de Guise was great: she apprehended the evil influence of Mayenne over the mind of her son—whose gloomy sensitiveness, irritated by repulse, might deter him from making fresh overtures.

The duchess accordingly wrote to her son, praying him not to be disheartened by the temporary failure of his agents, as she herself intended to use her influence with his majesty. She eloquently represented the madness of further contest with the crown; and bade the duke observe how soon his Catholic majesty consoled himself for the loss of his intended son-in-law—Philip having already commenced negotiations for the marriage of the Infanta with the archduke Ernest. Madame de Guise, therefore, repaired to the Louvre; and, after making a preliminary visit to Madame de Monceaux, she entered Henry's private cabinet, where the king was conversing with Rosny. "Madame de Guise," says the latter, "was so simple-hearted, that she did not comprehend the word deceit." With the fervour of a mother's eloquence, the duchess then pleaded for her young son. She forgot not to allege in extenuation of his revolt, the barbarous murder of his father, perpetrated almost in his presence by the late king; his subsequent imprisonment in the citadel of Tours; and the firmness with which the duke had declined to abet the designs of Philip II., for his alliance with Doña Isabel,

[1] Mem. de Sully, liv. 6 ème. De Thou., Dupleix. Fornier—Hist. de la Maison de Guise.

even when his house was on the verge of ruin. The duchess also prayed that compensation might be accorded to herself for the desolation of her own widowed bereavement. Henry was moved to tears: he rose, and, taking the hand of Madame de Guise, said, "Madame, I will grant all you ask. What do you require of me? What can I do to show you my esteem and compassion?" "I'ask your majesty," replied the duchess, "to cancel the nomination of your late commissioners, and to empower M. de Rosny aloue to treat with my son."

"What! this incorrigible Huguenot?" exclaimed Henry: "nevertheless, I agree; Rosny shall confer with the envoys of M. de Guise!" "Sire, your late envoys replied only, '*Il faut voir, il faut aviser, faisons mieux!*' so that it was impossible to treat with them." Henry laughed; but the same evening signed a warrant, in which the articles proposed by the duke de Guise were reserved for the examination of M. de Rosny.[1] The latter, flattered by the honour conferred by the duchess, set about the task of reconciliation with enthusiasm. Guise, duly warned by his mother, and his aunt, Madame de Montpensier, desisted from his pretensions on Champagne; and engaged to accept any government which the king, in his grace, might confer.

The deliberations were hastened by the knowledge that already deputies from the municipality of Rheims had set out, on the news of the probable rupture of the conferences at St. Germain, to make timely submission. With that gracious delicacy which enhanced any favour he conferred, Henry commanded that the mission of these envoys

[1] Mem de Sully, liv. 7 ème. Hist. de la Maison de Lorraine Guise.—Fornier. Davila, lib. 14.

should be concealed, in case they arrived before the completion of the treaty with M. de Guise. In the skilful hands of Rosny this document was soon ready to receive the royal ratification. Guise therein covenanted to cede Rheims, Rocroi, St. Dizier, Guise, Joinville, Fîmes, and Montcornet. The king granted the duke and his brothers complete amnesty for past events; and distributed the governments of the above mentioned places amongst the princes. A secret article was appended, by which the king agreed to give the duke the sum of 400,000 crowns, to extricate his lands from overwhelming burdens. Henry also promised at a suitable period to bestow upon him the government of a province. The treaty was signed by Madame de Guise; and by the three envoys who had before so fruitlessly negotiated at St. Germain.

The following day the deputies of the Rémois obtained audience. Henry gave them gracious reception, and condescended to inform the envoys of the treaty just concluded with Guise; adding, that he was nevertheless deeply sensible of the loyal affection of his good town of Rheims.

This accommodation greatly increased the royal power; and, moreover, produced so salutary an effect on the mind of the duke de Mercœur that he wrote to his sister the queen dowager Louise, praying her majesty privately to sound the dispositions of the king, and notify to him the result.

During this month of November, 1594, the king, with the assent of his council, confirmed anew the edict of Poitiers, granted by the late king Henry III. to his subjects of the reformed faith. This edict, which was a modification of the treaty of Beaulieu,[1] was the

[1] Negotiated by Queen Catherine de Medici in 1576.

only independent sovereign act performed by Henry III. during his chequered reign; and was always complacently termed by the latter—"*Mon édit de Poitiers.*" It conferred the privilege of worship according to the Huguenot ritual within certain districts of the realm; though no *prêche* might be holden within thirty miles of the capital. The marriage of converted priests was acknowledged to be legal; with other important privileges. The édict contained sixty-three articles. At the period when it was granted the decree was hailed by the Protestant communities; and was deemed so favourable to heresy, that the nominal cause for the arming of the League was to procure its subversion.[1] Its solemn acceptance by Henri IV., nevertheless, produced neither enthusiasm nor gratitude. A still greater extension of religious toleration had been expected by the ministers of the reformed churches; while the concession was viewed with sullen displeasure by the prelates of the realm; and in measure justified, in their opinion, the obduracy of the supreme pontiff. The duke de Bouillon, especially, resented the indifference shown by the king to conciliate the Protestant communities. With that bitterness of tongue for which the former was renowned he averred that the royal concession was made only to obtain possession of the person of the young Prince de Condé who was at St. Jean d'Angely, under the guardianship of Huguenot governors. He also set the rumour afloat that the duke de Mayenne had suggested to his Holiness, as a preliminary condition of the absolution demanded by the king, that the young Condé should be educated in the Romish faith. His majesty, therefore, Bouillon declared, in order to frustrate the

[1] Henry III., His Court and Times, vol. ii., bk. 5.

manœuvres of the League, offered the edict of Poitiers in exchange for the custody of the young prince; whose mother lay under sentence of death for the alleged crimes of adultery, and the assassination of her husband, the late M. de Condé.[1]

On the 28th of November 1594, the king departed from Paris, to make a brief inspection of his fortresses on the frontier of Picardy. The day previously a splendid ballet was given in the Louvre, in honour of the baptism of a son of Madame de Sourdis, for whom the king and Madame la Marquise stood sponsors. "Madame Gabrielle was arrayed sumptuously, and could scarcely stand from the weight of the stars and jewels with which she was adorned," writes an eye-witness. The king was attired in a habit of pearl gray satin, and wore his collar of St. Esprit. The religious ceremony was performed in the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, at six in the evening. The *mauvaises langues* of the court made malicious comments on the absence of M. de Sourdis; for the known *liaison* of his beautiful wife with the chancellor de Cheverny had long afforded both mirth and scandal. The pageant was nevertheless sumptuously ordered. The child was baptized by the Bishop of Maillezais; Madame de la Châtre[2] carried the babe, and the duke de Montpensier bore the salt.

The demeanour of Gabrielle d'Estrées when in public was always reserved and decorous. Her beauty and kindly manner were favourably contrasted with the haughty and irritable character of Madame; for

[1] De Thou., liv. 90.

[2] Jeanne Chabot, daughter of the Count de Jarnac. She first espoused René Anne de Anglure, Sieur de Givry et de Tancarville. Madame de la Châtre was the haughtiest woman of the court.

to wear the crown of the *fleurs-de-lis* was the steadfast aim of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Queen Marguerite had alienated hearts by flippant partialities. Gabrielle learned a lesson from the fate of the exile of Usson, from which she was not slow to profit. During the first days of reconciliation with Henri IV., the duchesses de Nemours and de Montpensier sought the friendship of the powerful favourite. Madame de Monceaux responded to these overtures with a tact and dignity which charmed the king. While she never presumed first to address these great ladies in public, Gabrielle received, but never returned their visits. In the royal circle, while the duchesses stood in the presence, Madame de Monceaux enjoyed the privilege of a *tabouret;* while Madame occupied a *fauteuil.* After the submission of M. de Guise, Madame began to demonstrate much regard for Madame de Montpensier, and daily accepted a visit from the latter; though few could divine the nature of the attraction subsisting between "the termagant duchess," and the princess, with her religious prejudices and decorum.

"Everyone wondered at the assurance of Madame de Montpensier, who showed herself everywhere," writes a contemporary. "It is true, that Madame appears to give her more friendly greeting than she vouchsafes to any other lady." The constant presence of the duchess at the Louvre, however, irritated the old servants of the king, who knew how fatally her intrigues had complicated affairs; and who regarded her as an audacious and dangerous ally. One day, M. de Crillon, observing the deportment of Madame de Montpensier, was seen first to whisper in the ear of a gentleman present, and then to retire with an air of disgust from the

saloon. Soon after, the personage addressed by Crillon came up to the duchess and said, "Do you know, Madame, what M. de Crillon has just said? He whispered to me, that as you had killed the late king, you deserved to be assassinated in your turn!" "Certes!" responded Madame de Montpensier, in a loud voice, "I did not kill the late king, because I had not requisite power and influence. But I acknowledge that I rejoiced when the deed was done. You may tell M. de Crillon what I say!" [1]

No amount of public obloquy could quell the spirit of Catherine de Lorraine; she laughed at the caricatures and verses, which swarmed throughout the capital, recording her adventures when perambulating the streets of Paris, in the processions of half-clad fanatics. She jested with the king, and returned his ribald *bons mots;* she warded off the sarcasm of Bouillon; she ridiculed Rosny's sententious prudery; and she attended *le prêche* with Madame. The young Louise Marguerite de Guise, who in many respects resembled her aunt, was also a frequent visitant to Madame. Her preference for the duke de Bellegarde still existed; but the king discouraged the project of a matrimonial alliance, which Louise is said to have contemplated. Henry's subtle expedient was to renew through Villeroy the flattering expectation that Mademoiselle de Guise might be hereafter chosen to share the throne. The duke de Bellegarde, about this period, therefore, being anxious to reinstate himself entirely in the confidence of his majesty, who could never forget the duke's former engagement to Gabrielle d'Estrées,

[1] Journal du Règne de Henri IV—L'Estoile année 1594. Crillon often said to the King, "Sire, gardez le petit couteau de Montpensier!"

requested permission, through the latter, to affiance himself to Mademoiselle de Beuil, daughter and heiress of M. de Fontaines, governor of St. Malo. Henry gave cordial assent, and highly lauded the beauty and virtues of the duke's intended bride; whose wealth was reported to be enormous.

The king, therefore, in high good humour, quitted Paris on the 28th day of November, and proceeded to Compiègne. The news of the great military preparations organizing in Italy for the invasion of France, during the following year, by the constable of Castile,[1] had rendered it necessary to despatch Biron and his brave *corps d'armée* to garrison Burgundy. The duke de Nevers remained in Paris, where his presence was needed to superintend the registration of the royal declaration, respecting the edict given at Poitiers by the late king; and to which it was expected that MM. de la Cour would offer sturdy opposition. The king visited St. Quentin, Amiens, Abbeville, and Peronne; being generally accompanied during his surveys by the duke de Longueville. The correspondence of the king was active during this period. He wrote a despatch to the cardinal de Joyeuse, who was then in Rome, containing many dutiful messages to the pope. The king also addressed Bellièvre, governor of Lyons, upon the affairs of Provence; he expresses his anxiety respecting the movements of the dukes de Mayenne and Epernon; and announces his resolve to visit Lyons at the commencement of the year.[2] The escape of the duke de Nemours

[1] Don Ferdinando de Velasco, Duque de Friās, constable of Castile, governor of the Milanese.

[2] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Harlay, 1187, fol. 234. Edited by M. de Xivrey, Lettres Missives de Henri IV.

from the fort of Pierre Encise had caused renewed commotion in the city of Lyons: and it needed all the firmness of the king's loyal subjects to frustrate the intrigues of the Spanish court; which, in league with the adherents of Nemours, maintained a harassing warfare in the adjacent districts. Having duly provided for the safety of his Flemish frontier, the king set out for St. Germain, where he was to spend the festival of Christmas.

In Paris, meantime, the rigour of the executive government maintained outward tranquillity. Nevertheless, an under-current of disaffection prevailed, which at this period manifested itself in an atrocious attempt on the life of the king. Reaction had followed the excitement consequent on the restoration of the royal power in Paris. The nomination of Protestants to high offices of state; the proceedings of Madame and her ministers, which had been connived at by his majesty; the prosecution instituted against the Jesuits; and the recent re-enactment of the edict of Poitiers—were griefs which stirred the dormant fanaticism of the sections of the capital. The monastic orders, and especially the Jesuits, gave impulse to the movement. The king, it was said, waited his opportunity to apostatize again from the faith; that his ministers in Rome did all in their power to retard the royal shrift; instead, as it was represented, of employing every means to mollify the resentment of his holiness.

In the Jesuit seminary of the Rue St. Antoine was a young student named Jean Châtel, the son of a wealthy clothier of Paris.[1] This Châtel, like his

[1] "Un jeune garçon agé de 18 a 19 ans, nommé Jean Châtel, elevé au College des Jesuites, fils de Pierre Châtel, drapier, demeurant devant la principale porte du Palais de Paris."—Cayet Chron. Nov.

prototype Jacques Clement, had been leading a life of vicious excess, alternating with religious ecstasies and visions. So hopeful a subject soon became a favourite disciple with the Jesuit fathers. Châtel was admitted by them to join in their "spiritual exercises;" and, it was stated, had remained sometimes four hours before a picture or a crucifix entranced in meditation. Gradually Châtel was initiated into the political grievances of the order; and was desired to pray "that God would ordain by providential interposition the removal of a tyrant, whom it was sin to term a king!" These insinuations, and the treasonable harangues of the fathers, and of the curés who still remained hidden in the monasteries of Paris, excited the fanatical fury of Châtel; and he resolved to expiate the deeds of impurity which he had committed by slaying the heretical prince. The king spent Christmas-day at the palace of St. Germain, where Madame de Monceaux had declined to follow the court, on account of Madame, whose society Gabrielle avoided. On the 27th of December the King, therefore, came into Paris about six in the evening, with a great suite of gentlemen, among whom were the count de Soissons, the prince de Couty, the count de St. Paul, M. de Rosny and others, and alighted at the Hôtel de Schomberg, the abode of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Châtel, meanwhile, had gone forth to meet the *cortége*, having by some means ascertained the royal movements. The cavalcade was attended by a troop of torch-bearers and equerries. Châtel asked one of these persons which was the king? "That noble cavalier wearing the fur gloves is his majesty," responded the man, contemptuously. Châtel followed the *cortége* to the

portal of the Hôtel Schomberg; and during the confusion consequent on the royal arrival, managed to slip in amongst the lords of the suite, and actually penetrated to the saloon in which Madame la Marquise received the King. Waiting to salute his majesty were the lords de Montigny[1] and de Ragny;[2] besides a number of illustrious personages. After greeting Madame de Monceaux, and exchanging gibes with a favourite dwarf named Mathurine, the king, followed by the latter, turned to ceive the homage of Montigny and de Ragny. Châtel, meantime, contrived to make his way unobserved close behind the king, and suddenly aimed a blow with a poniard at his majesty's throat. Henry was in the act of stooping to raise M. de Montigny, who, kneeling, had kissed the royal hand. The blow, therefore, providentially fell on the king's face, the knife dividing the upper lip, and breaking a tooth.[3] Henry, perceiving that blood flowed from his face, exclaimed, "I am wounded!—*diable soit de la folle! elle m'a blessé!*"[4] Mathurine, however, who stood close to the royal elbow, hearing herself accused, screamed a denial; and instantly, with shrewd wit, ran and locked the door of the saloon, so that

[1] François de la Grange, Sieur de Montigny, a renowned and valiant officer, marshal of France in 1616, and governor of Paris.

[2] François de la Magdeleine, marquis de Ragny, Chevalier de l'Ordre en 1595.

[3] MS. de Béth: Bibl. Imp. vol. 9033. Procedure faite contre Jehan Chastel—Œconomies Royales, liv 7ème. De Thou, liv. iii. Davila, lib. 14.

[4] Other historians state that Henry exclaimed, addressing Montigny: "Ah, cousin, tu m'as blessé!" to which Montigny replied: "A Dieu ne plaise, sire, que j'ai la pensée de toucher ni blesser votre majesté! Je n'ai rien sur moi que l'epée qui est à mon côté."

no one could escape. The consternation was intense. Madame de Monceaux fainted in the arms of her women; the cavaliers drew their swords; while Rosny seized the arm of his royal master to ascertain the injury inflicted. M. de Soissons, meantime, caught the little assassin by the hair of his head, and dragged him forwards, exclaiming—"Here is the traitor!" Châtel, pale and trembling, denied the accusation. Flambeaux were brought; and the knife was found on the floor of the chamber. A gentleman took it up, and struck the culprit a blow across the mouth. Henry then interposed; and commanded that Châtel should be consigned to the custody of the Prévôt de l'Hôtel until further examination could be made into the affair. Pending the arrival of the archers, Châtel confessed that he was a student at the Jesuit seminary; and lamented his folly in having listened to the counsels of the fathers. "Ah!" exclaimed the king, "I have been told by the lips of many that that holy society hates me; but now I feel it on my own!" The King's wound was then examined and dressed; the surgeons pronounced it slight, provided that the weapon used was not poisoned—a terrible suspicion which his majesty's officers forthwith proceeded to solve in the torture chamber.[1]

As soon as intelligence of the regicidal attempt of Châtel transpired, the streets of the capital were thronged. Crowds hurried to the Hôtel Schomberg to cheer the king. A furious mob proceeded to

[1] Mém. de Cheverny. L'Histoire prodigieuse du detestable parricide—Mém. de Condé, t. 6. Duplessis d'Argentré: Collectio Judiciorum de novis erroribus, t. 2, p. 524, et seq. Lettre du Roy envoyée a MM. les Consuls echevins, etc., de Lyons —Imprimée 1595.

attack the College de Clermont, and to burn the Jesuit houses of the capital; a design prevented alone by the forethought of the king, who sent M. de Soissons to quell the tumult. Madame de Montpensier, on hearing of the event, fainted away, or pretended to do so: then, on recovering, she entered her coach and drove to the Hôtel Schomberg, where she was denied admittance. An express was despatched by Rosny to Madame at St. Germain, to inform her of the occurrence. The princess was deeply affected; and though the intelligence reached her after midnight, she assembled her household, and caused her chaplain to offer thanksgiving for his majesty's miraculous escape. The day following Henry was able to despatch missives to various municipalities of the realm, containing a relation of the attempt; with assurances that he had received only a trifling wound. "Thank God, I am so little hurt, that I am not compelled to keep my bed an hour longer than usual; and I hope to participate in the solemnity for which I hastened my return to Paris—the Feast of the Institution of my Order of St. Esprit."[1] Henry was especially anxious to preside at this ceremonial, which was fixed by statute for New Year's day; for by many of his subjects its celebration was regarded as a solemn pledge of the king's fealty to his new faith.

Châtel meantime was conveyed to the prison of Fort l'Evêque, where he was interrogated by

[1] Circulaire sur l'attentat de Chastel.—Mem. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 2. The king writes in a private letter to Mornay, "Vous entendrés par celle que j'ai commandé Lomenie de vous ecrire, ce fruit des Jesuites et des Ligueurs; et comme je l'ay belle escapade."—Ibid.

Lugoli, Pérvôt de l'Hôtel. He confessed his regicidal intents, and added, "That he had committed abominable crimes, and had frequently heard it said at the college where he studied, that the king, being a heretic, a tyrant, and a usurper, it was permitted to slay him; moreover, such was the universal sentiment of the Jesuits. He therefore had resolved to undertake the holy mission, in the hope of diminishing his purgatorial torments; so that, if he were condemned hereafter to eight degrees of fire, the enterprise he trusted to accomplish might diminish his torments by four degrees."[1] When asked if he had accomplices, Châtel replied, "No; that he had taken the knife from a dresser in the kitchen of his father's house, he having previously confided his enterprise to his said father; who thereupon attempted to dissuade him from the crime, and assured him that so sanguinary an impulse was a snare of Satan." Warrants of arrest were, on this confession, issued against Pierre Châtel, the father, Denise Hazard, the mother of the regicide, and Catherine and Madelaine, his sisters. These unfortunate people were incarcerated in the Conciergerie, their property and papers were seized, and they were subjected to rigorous interrogatories. A paper was found in the chamber of the little fanatic, on which Châtel had recorded his crimes; and his hope that the death of Henri de Bourbon might expiate his guilt. At a second interrogatory, Châtel confessed that his tutor, Guéret, had no knowledge of his intent, more than that common to every member of the society of Jesus, which held the king excommunicated and deposed. The following day the criminal was removed to the

[1] De Thou., liv. cxi. Procès criminel de Jean Châtel—Mém. de Condé, t. 6—Appendix.

Conciergerie, and his trial for regicide commenced before the High Court. Guards were meantime posted in the Jesuit houses and colleges of Paris; and commissioners were appointed by the parliament to examine the papers of the communities, with power to subject each member to a searching interrogatory. Documents of a highly treasonable nature were discovered amongst the papers of a Jesuit priest and professor of philosophy, named Jean Guignard, who was instantly arrested.[1] Public excitement against the Jesuit fathers became irrepressible; and their expulsion from the capital was clamorously demanded. The University of Paris denounced the doctrines and practice of the Order; and ascribed the past miseries of the realm to its fatal principles. "The watchwords of these turbulent churchmen are—one God, one pope, one king of Christendom—*i.e.*, the Catholic King,"[2] exclaimed the eloquent ad-

[1] The most extraordinary ravings were found amongst the papers of Guignard: "Que le Neron cruel (Henri III.) avait été tué par un Clement; et qu'on avait fait une grande faute a la St. Barthélemy de ne pas ouvrir la veine basilique (royale). Faut il donner le nom de roi de France a un Sardanapale, ou à un renard de Béarn? Appellerons nous roi de Portugal un lion? Reine d'Angleterre une louve? Roi de Suéde un griffon?"

[2] Arnauld said that the principle of the Jesuits was to obey *per omnia, et in omnibus*, their General and Superiors: that they had been heard to pray in Paris *pro rege nostro Philippo II.*; that Bellarmino maintained that the Pope has power to depose all princes. He also accused the communities of abducting children from their parents; of extorting testamentary bequests; and holding themselves absolved, in all matters civil and religious, from jurisdiction, other than that of their General, who was himself irresponsible and infallible. The oration is one of singular power, though filled with exaggerated statements.

vocate, Arnauld. "Is it not true—nay, I take all Paris to witness—that one of these traitors, Father Commolet, entered his pulpit on Christmas-day last, and in allusion to our Christian King, exclaimed, '*Il nous faut un Aod, fût-il soldat, fût-il goujat, fût-il berger—il n'importe!*'" Arnauld next stated that the Jesuits regarded their general, Aquaviva, as an incarnation of Jesus Christ—that this general was always a Spanish subject; and that he had only to ordain the assassination of the king, when a hundred executants of his abominable decree would arise. The chief cause of the hostility exhibited towards the Jesuits, however, was their refusal to submit to the authority of the University of Paris; or to accept the scholastic and theological decrees of the faculty—a source of perpetual antagonism. The little sympathy demonstrated for the sufferings of the people during the siege of Paris; the grudging charities doled by "*cette secte empestée;*" and the ill feelings evoked in the process instituted by the government for the restoration of the crown jewels—which had been temporarily suspended—unconsciously influenced the decision given by the judges in the affair of Châtel.

On the 29th day of December, therefore, three days after the King's life had been attempted, the Parliament of Paris gave a decree which declared Châtel guilty of the crime of intended parricide; and condemned him, after enduring tortures ordinary and extraordinary, to make *amende honorable* before the portal of the church of Notre Dame; and afterwards to be dismembered by horses on a scaffold in the Place de Grêve. Pierre Châtel the father, for not restraining, or giving notice of his son's murderous designs, was condemned to tortures, and to banishment for nine years. The court likewise inflicted

a fine of 2,000 crowns. The house in which the criminal lived was ordered to be razed to the ground; and a pillar erected on its site commemorative of the detestable crime. Madame Châtel and her daughters were liberated. Jean Guéret, tutor to the intended regicide, was banished. Next came the famous manifesto of banishment against the Jesuit fathers—"The Court decrees that the Order of Jesus, and especially the Priests of the College of Clermont, and every member of the said order shall quit Paris, and every town where the said Society possesses colleges, &c., within three days after the promulgation of this mandate; the said priests to leave the kingdom within fifteen days: the cause thereof being that the members of the Society are corrupters of public morals, disturbers of public tranquillity, and enemies of the king and the state. In default of obedience to this decree, the High Court declares all members of the Society guilty of high treason, and confiscates the property of the communities."[1] Jean Guignard received sentence of death on the gallows for the seditious documents found amongst his effects; many other members of the fraternity suffered

[1] Registres du Parlement de Paris. De Thou., liv. cxi. The doctrine that it was blessed to kill heretic princes, though maintained by Mariana and other intolerant theologians, was yet deprecated by all enlightened persons. Don Carlos de Coloma, a contemporary, says: "Licito dizen algunos que es matar al tiranno: peligrosa doctrina por lo menos, por el motivo que puede dar à semejantes males: porque, quien sabe que es tiranno el qui mata? Quien hazé tan sabio a un hombre solo, que sin conocimiento de causa, sin admitir defensa haga la carga, juzgue, y excute? especialmente en la persona real; y a un mismo tiempo sirva de fiscal juez, y verdugo de quien naçio para dueño, y cabeça de justicia, sin submission à otro Juez que à Dios."—Libro 2, Coloma.

torture and imprisonment. The sentence on Châtel was executed by torchlight on the evening of the 29th of December, the day upon which the award was made public. Châtel bore his tortures with surprising fortitude; he refused to petition for a commutation of any portion of the sentence, which, with fierce elation, he declared would enable him to pass unscathed through the purgatorial fires. The Jesuits of the capital were next assembled in their house Rue St. Antoine, and kept under *surveillance* until Sunday, January 8th, 1595. On the afternoon of that day, the fathers, thirty-seven in number, were conducted by an usher of the High Court to one of the gates of Paris, and ignominiously dismissed. The Jesuit communities of Bourges, Lyons, Rouen, Nevers, and Boulogne—in which towns the Society had large and wealthy establishments—were likewise ejected on the same day.[1] The fathers retired principally to Avignon, and to Douay in the Low Countries, where the Order issued a famous manifesto, vindicating the teaching of the Jesuit fraternity of Paris; and proving that the assassination of heretic princes, or of princes at variance with the Holy See, was lawful and praiseworthy. A solemn appeal to Rome was made, and presented through Aquaviva, General of the Order, which proved a serious impediment in the negotiations of Henry's envoys to the Holy See.

The news of the attempt on the life of the king reached Rome on the 19th of January, by the despatches of the Venetian envoy. "Rome shuddered, and shudders still, at the intelligence of the atro-

[1] "Je suis de tout guery de ma blessure: ce sont là les fruits des Jesuites—mais ils viuderont mon royaume"—Lettre du roy à M. Duplessis Mornay, t. 2, Mém.

cious attempt,"[1] writes d'Ossat, then bishop elect of Rennes, to Villeroy. The former waited on cardinal Aldobrandini, the nephew and prime-minister of the pope, officially to notify the event. The cardinal expressed profound regret at the crime of Châtel; upon which he moralized, and intimated that it was a warning sent to the king from on High to perfect his submission to the Holy See, and thereby save his soul, considering the awful uncertainty of human life. He next slightly alluded to the decree of banishment launched against the Jesuits; adding that "he feared it would delay the much wished for absolution of his majesty: nevertheless, his holiness would feel gratified at a personal communication from M. d'Ossat."[2] The successes of Henri IV., and his dignified resolve to nominate no fresh ambassador to Rome, unless previously assured that the mission would not be fruitless and humiliating, like that of the duke de Nevers, occasioned infinite disquietude to the pope. D'Ossat appeared at the papal court in the character of private envoy of the queen dowager Louise; though in reality all communications with France passed through the hands of that skilful and able churchman. D'Ossat's letters are models of diplomacy. He seldom entered into political controversies; but rendered himself so conversant with the subject under debate, that any false assertion or pro-

[1] Lettre 15, année 1595, ce 28 Janvier.

[2] D'Aubigné replied, when the king asked his opinion on the attempt of Châtel, "Je dis, sire, que le Dieu que vous avez renoncé que des lèvres, ne vous a percé que les lèvres; mais que si votre cœur le renonce, il vous transpercera le cœur."—Confessions de Sancy, chap. 7, of which D'Aubigné himself is supposed to be the author.

bable surmise on the part of an opponent he was able to confute—and that in language and manner most insinuating.

Pope Clement VIII., at the audience he granted to d'Ossat, was deeply affected. His holiness even shed tears while discoursing on the miserable condition of France. Clement, however, recovered himself sufficiently to allude with violence to the decrees of the Parliament of Paris, relative to the Jesuit communities: "The High Court has most unjustly driven from the realm these holy men: the culprit, nevertheless, gave no direct evidence against any one individual of them. Moreover, the Court has seen fit to condemn as heretical the proposition 'that king Henry ought not to be acknowledged until he has obtained absolution from the Holy See!' Judge, M. d'Ossat, if such proceedings are likely to advance matters between ourselves and the realm of France, as we so fervently pray!" exclaimed his holiness. D'Ossat observed, that doubtless so orthodox a body as the High Court would not have proceeded to extremity unless compelled by cogent necessity. "God grant it! To exile an order from the realm in such fashion is too notable a scandal!" replied the pope.[1] The following day brought a letter from Villeroy, with a copy of the decree, and a relation of its execution, to the unspeakable dismay of the Consistory. One of the expelled Jesuits, Guéret, ventured to approach Rome: but such was the firm attitude of the French government through its agent d'Ossat, that Guéret received a mandate to remain at Frascati; from whence he retired to Milan, and

[1] "Notre Saint Père jeta un grand soupir du profond de son cœur; et se mit a pleurer," writes d'Ossat to Villeroy.—Lettre 16, année 1595.

placed himself under the protection of the Spanish viceroy.

The wound of the king, meanwhile, was not sufficiently healed to allow his majesty to hold the chapter of St. Esprit on New Year's-day. The probes of the surgeons, and the remedies they applied to the wound to guard against the effect of poison, greatly increased Henry's sufferings. On Monday, the 2nd of January, his majesty received the congratulations of the High Court, and of the privy-council. The address was loyal, and abounded in keen sallies relative to the misdeeds of the Jesuits. "True, Messeigneurs," rejoined his majesty; "nevertheless, by your counsel the former process instituted against these agitators was suspended.[1] It appears that you waited for these said Jesuits to be convicted by my lips!" The king, though ever ready with a jest, was deeply affected by the attempt made by Châtel upon his life. On the 5th of January Henry assisted at the "Te Deum" celebrated in thanksgiving for his preservation. The king appeared dressed in black; his moustache was shaved and his lip plaistered. He was received with acclamations. Henry, nevertheless, reclined back in his coach, with a melancholy countenance. In reply to the observation of Bellegarde, on the enthusiasm which his presence elicited, Henry responded with a sigh, "Ah, if my greatest enemy was to pass before this people as I am now doing, in kingly state, he would be cheered as much, or more! Since I have entered Paris I have heard of nothing but murderous attempts on my life!"[2] On arriving at the portal of Notre Dame, his majesty could not resist a

[1] On the affair of the crown jewels.

[2] Journal de Henri IV.—l'Etoile.

humorous sally. M. de Pontcarré came forward to receive the king, attired in a court suit, without the ponderous scarlet robe worn by his colleagues of the High Court of Parliament, who were present. "Ah," said the king, "here is M. de Pontcarré, who has, I see, forsaken his red robe, though he has not forgotten his red nose!" Henry saluted Madame la Marquise as he passed to his chair. Gabrielle d'Estrées was also attired in black, with a chaplet of pearls pendent from her girdle. The king proceeded to the church of St. Geneviève after leaving Notre Dame, and devoutly offered incense before the shrine of the patroness of Paris. When the *cortége* returned to the Louvre, the king still reclining back in his coach, some malcontent in the crowd audaciously exclaimed: "*Voilà déjà Henri de Bourbon au cul de la charrette!*" [1]

The following Sunday Henry held the first chapter of his Order at which he personally presided, in the church of the Augustinians of Paris. The ceremonial was magnificent. Henry created twenty-eight knights, bestowing the grand cross on his principal adherents in recompense for their services. The chief cavaliers so honoured were the dukes de Montpensier and Longueville, the count de St. Paul, MM. de St. Luc, Brissac, Humières, Fervaques, Montigny, Balzac, and Bordaisière, uncle of Madame de Monceaux. At the offertory the king gave forty-one pieces of gold, a piece for every year of his age. His majesty dined in the refectory of the monastery, making sumptuous fare.[2] Afterwards the king attended vespers

[1] Journal de Henri IV.—l'Etoile.

[2] The banquet cost the community 2,000 francs, which sum, however, was reimbursed by the king; who further sent the

at Notre Dame. A concourse of great ladies had assembled to witness the procession of knights. Many dames not of the first quality were refused admittance into the cathedral until after the entrance of the king. Henry, on alighting from his coach, bowed to this fair assemblage imprisoned behind the barriers at the portal. He then graciously said:—"Mesdames, I know that you all wish to enter; but unless I give place and conduct you into the church, you will never get within the portal. Therefore all of you precede me and get the best places you can, to do honour to my knights!" At the royal command the barriers fell; and the throng of blushing *bourgeoises*—each lady curtseying profoundly—passed before his majesty into the church.

The following day more serious affairs occupied the attention of the government. The recent attempt, and the executions and inquisitions following thereupon, had greatly shaken public confidence. Commercial credit suffered; and many wealthy persons, it was reported, deeming Paris insecure as a place of residence, were preparing to depart to settle in England, or in the Low Countries. Numbers of students precipitately quitted the capital: some fearing arrest for past misdemeanours; others because they had attended the Jesuit class-rooms in the College de Clermont. It was also ascertained that many foreign scholars, about to enrol themselves as members of the famed Parisian university, retired when about to cross the frontiers, on the news of the parricidal designs of Châtel, and the exile of the

abbot a present of six sheep, half an ox, and a hogshead of wine, with the message: "Qu'ils bussent à lui; et regardassant qu'en leur couvent il n'y eût point de liqueur—ce qu'ils promirent de bon cœur."

Jesuit fathers. To end this distrust—which was fast merging into panic when news arrived of the vast preparations making by king Philip for the invasion of France—Henry sent for the cardinal-bishop of Paris. The result of the conference was, that by the royal direction Gondy assembled the priests of the capital, the doctors of the Sorbonne, and the heads of religious houses, in the hall of the Episcopal palace; and demanded the opinion of the assemblage on the two following points:—Whether the reverend personages present believed that it was lawful and right to pray publicly for king Henry, before his reconciliation with the Holy See? Secondly, what was the opinion of the assemblage on the late regicidal attempt; and especially on the dogma of the Jesuits, "that the assassination of heretic princes, or of princes at variance with the Holy See, was lawful and praiseworthy?"[1]

The intention of the king, which he had confided to Gondy, was to cause all recusant priests and monks, as well as those who declared their assent and adherence to the maxims of the Jesuit Constitutions, to be deprived of their benefices, conducted to the frontier, and dismissed the realm—no dread of the displeasure of Rome arresting the royal measures. The factious discontent promoted in the capital by the machinations of the *curés*, and by their refusal to pray during the mass for king Henry, was notorious. It nourished the old religious rancours, and rendered the purification of the city impossible. The alternative of exile, or of obedience to the government, fortunately, however, had not to be mooted. Each of the ecclesiastics present hastened to disown the principles which had prompted

[1] De Thou, liv. cxi. Davila, lib. 14.

the late attempt. They proclaimed that no scruple was legitimate which forbade public prayer for the health and preservation of his majesty; nevertheless, they humbly exhorted the king to execute without delay his resolve to send ambassadors to Rome to put the last seal on his blessed abjuration of heresy, by receiving the benediction of God's vicegerent. The ecclesiastics, moreover, petitioned the cardinal bishop to exhort his diocesans to intercede, so that absolution might be promptly conceded to the king, before schism and infidelity took deeper root in the heart of the people.

This satisfactory termination of the conference gave great joy to the king; who caused the resolutions and admissions of the ecclesiastics to be published, with fac-similes of the signatures appended to the original act. The submission of his late turbulent opponents enabled the king to proffer another overture to Rome, without diminution of the royal *prestige*. Henry, therefore, promised to accredit to his holiness, Du Perron bishop designate of Evreux, and d'Ossat bishop elect of Rennes—the one envoy being distinguished for his genial humour, and powers as an orator and casuist; the other, from long experience in the subtleties of Roman politics—being a statesman acute, learned, and resolute.[1] The royal decision was communicated by d'Ossat to the papal prime-minister, cardinal Aldobrandini. The conces-

[1] "Arnaldo de Ossat sin mostrar que era criado del principe de Bearne, andava en Roma con gran dissimulacion eficazmente persuadiendo el negocio, y solicitando per diversas vias y medios, porque era persona grave y de muchas letras: y como andava en habito de clerigo, sin ostentation ni ruydo negociava." —Herrera, lib. 2—Historia de España despues el año 1554, desde 1598, in fol.

sion was hailed by Clement and his cardinals. The clever diplomatist dwelt on the ardent desire of his Christian Majesty for reconciliation with the church; and on the humility shown by the king, who was satisfied to be represented at the papal court on so supreme an occasion, by two humble prelates owing canonical obedience to his holiness. "My heart throbs with thankfulness; and I am moved with intense desire to confer with his majesty's plenipotentiaries," responded Clement VIII. "My bowels yearn over my eldest son, France; and God is witness I would forfeit my right arm to restore to France the glory and prosperity of the reign of Henry II.!"[1] The triumphs of Henri Quatre had singularly moved the zeal of his holiness, since his contemptuous rejection of the overtures tendered by the duke de Nevers.

By the middle of January, 1595, the young duke de Guise and his brothers had arrived at court.[2] The duke wrote to M. de Rosny, stating his desire to throw himself at the feet of his majesty, and solicit reconciliation. This letter Rosny was to lay before the king; a private note, however, was written by the duke, inquiring whether it would be prudent to trust himself in Paris without safe conduct? Rosny sagely advised the duke to rely on the good-will of the king. On Sunday, the 15th of January, Guise entered Paris by the Porte St. Antoine. The duke de Bellegarde met him a league from the capital, being deputed by his majesty to assure him of a friendly reception. As Guise passed along the streets to the Louvre no cheers greeted him; the people gazed

[1] D'Ossat, Lettre 19—De Rome, 14 d'Avril, 1595.

[2] The Prince de Joinville and the Chevalier de Guise.

curiously on the son of their late hero, and coldly speculated on his future position and career. The duke looked pale and haughty, his hat was slanted over his brow, and he rode at a rapid pace. On arriving at the Louvre, Guise repaired to the king's chamber. He found his majesty conversing with Rosny and Cheverny. Henry generously hastened to embrace his fallen rival, and to assure him of welcome and consideration. The young duke muttered a few words in confusion; and was about to refer to past events, when the king good-naturedly interposed, saying, with much majesty—"*Mon cousin*, I perceive that, like myself, you do not excel as an orator. I understand what you wish to express. We are all subject to commit follies and imprudencies in our youth. I forget the past; but for the future avoid similar errors. Submit to my legitimate authority, and I will be a father to you; nor shall there be any in my court whom I will favour more than yourself!"[1] The king then spoke of the deceased duke de Guise, and said, "that in their youth they had been great friends, though often rivals in love." Guise presently found words to thank the king for his gracious reception; which he did with apparent sincerity. He then took leave and retired to the Hôtel de Guise, where the duke was received with rapture by his mother, and by Madame de Montpensier. The indignation of the latter was intense at the silent greeting given to her nephew by "*ces trente mille perroquets*," as she now flippantly designated the people of Paris. The same afternoon the duke de Guise paid his respects to Madame; and kissed also the fair hand of Gabrielle d'Estrées.

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 7ème. Journal du Règne de Henri IV. Fornier, Hist. de la Maison de Guise.

In the evening Madame commanded a ballet, in honour of the arrival of the duke, at which there was a great muster of courtiers and ladies. This style of entertainment was much patronized by the princess despite her religious notions; nor did Madame and her ministers hesitate to sanction these assemblies on the Sunday. The dancers were the most lively and graceful women of the court. Gabrielle d'Estrées, attired with the splendour of a queen, led the dance, and was hailed *la belle des belles*. The king, with his sister, the count de Soissons, and other of the princes, occupied chairs under a canopy. The duke de Guise, the hero of the *fête*, however, stood gloomily apart, taking no part in the merriment, and refusing tempting solicitations to join the dancers. "The said duke looked pale and melancholy. He was attired in a white satin suit; and wore a cloak of black velvet, with which he was often observed to hide his face."[1]

Thoughts replete with bitter memories doubtless agitated the mind of the young prince. The son and representative of the Great Duke, whose ambition had soared to the throne of the *fleurs de lis*, and to avenge whose death the League organized its legions, stood in the halls of the Louvre a pardoned rebel, indebted to the clemency of the brother-in-law and successor of Henry III. for a remnant of the mighty revenues of his house. Reminiscences, also, must have risen of the terrible massacre of Blois—memories of three years of rigorous prison and priva-

[1] "M. de Guise portait au visage une façon fort melancholique, ayant son chapeau enfoncé, un pourpoint de satin blanc fort gras, avec un manteau noir: il se couvroit le visage, et ne voulait jamais danser."—Journal de Henri IV. De Thou. Dupleix.

tion—then a fleeting vision of a royal crown, with the hand of the Spanish Infanta—recollections full of sadness; sorrowful enough to depress a spirit, strong and hardened in vicissitude.

The day following the king promised M. de Guise the government of Provence, to the indignation of the duke d'Epernon; whose ambitious enterprises and league with Savoy sufficed, if the king had so willed, to justify an indictment for treason. Epernon, on the demise of his brother, M. de la Valette, governor of Provence, had usurped the supreme administration of the province, and proceeded to adjust affairs without reference to the executive government of the realm—displacing garrisons, and fortifying the capital city, Aix, in suspicious conformity to the supposed designs of the duke de Savoye. The arrogant demeanour of Epernon alienated the Provençal nobility: complaints innumerable were addressed to the crown for redress, coupled with the covert menace that the sway of M. de Mayenne was to be preferred to the tyranny of Epernon; who feigned to disregard the authority and powers of M. de Lesdiguiéres, his majesty's lieutenant-general. The intense self-esteem of the duke d'Epernon had been wounded by the triumph of Henri IV. in defiance of his original discountenance; and because Paris had surrendered to the king without his mediation. The duke chafed at the overthrow of his supremacy at court; and at the haughty surprise manifested by the king at the lover-like attention which he had thought fit to proffer to Madame.

To remedy this condition of affairs, and to reduce the cities of Aix and Marseilles to loyal obedience, became one of the many puzzling dilemmas which beset the cabinet. Epernon possessed powerful

allies in the south, whom his arrest or attainder might alienate. The constable de Montmorency, *de facto* lord of Languedoc, was the uncle of the deceased duchess d'Epernon, and the guardian of her son's interests as heir of Foix Candale. The king, however, prompted by the shrewd Rosny, devised an expedient. His majesty referred the affairs of Provence to the adjudication of the constable; and despatched one M. Lafin to act as negotiator between the dukes—Montmorency being empowered to decide authoritatively on all matters connected with the province. The constable, though he had previously supported the duke against the alleged assumptions of Lesdiguières, was so flattered by the confidence reposed in him, that he set himself energetically to repress the enterprises of Epernon. By order of the constable, after many menacing demonstrations, Epernon evacuated Aix which his majesty's military lieutenant Lesdiguières re-occupied; and for a season obedience to the royal authority was restored throughout the towns of Provence.[1] The refusal of the king to confirm the authority of M. d'Epernon, an event which was followed by the donation of the government of Provence to the duke de Guise, renewed the feuds temporarily assuaged. Epernon secretly concluded a league offensive and defensive with the duke de Savoye; and prepared to dispute for the possession of Provence. The first result of this treasonable alliance had been the fall of Brigueras, on the 23rd October; which place was so straitly invested by the duke of Savoye, that it

[1] Girard—Vie du Duc d'Epernon. Davila, lib. 14. Lesdiguières professed the reformed faith—Epernon was a rigid Catholic—a difference which increased the acrimony of the broils between these personages.

capitulated before it could be relieved by Lesdiguières.[1]

Neither were affairs more cheering in Bretagne. The duke de Mercœur had shown so great an inclination to reconcile himself with the king, that his sister, queen Louise, proceeded to Ancennis, to negotiate a truce; but, encouraged by the fallacious promises of Spain, the duke now declined to submit. His hostile notification was promulgated after the despatch of two royal envoys, MM. de St. Luc and de la Roche, sent at the prayer of Louise to aid her mediation. The duke, instead of meeting these commissioners, published a manifesto insulting to the king. He there averred that the royal abjuration was a shameless deceit; that religion was never more endangered than by the perfidious homage of Le Béarnnois: finally, he called upon all pious Christians to arm for the rescue of the faith.

Many towns of Bretagne, however, glad at any cost to escape from anarchy; and distrusting the disinterestedness of Mercœur's zeal, insisted on making submission to Henri Quatre. Their deputies reminded the duke of the former fervour of his assurances that "he had taken up arms only for the defence of the faith; and that when the king made abjuration of his heresy he was ready to submit." Hostilities, nevertheless, recommenced; and the Marshal d'Aumont laid siege to Morlaix. The town capitulated, though the citadel stood an obstinate siege. Fresh succours arriving from England, under Colonel Norris, d'Aumont was enabled, in the very

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. cxi. Davila. Girard. Dupleix.

teeth of Mercœur and his Spanish allies, to capture this fort. The fortress of Crodon and the town of Corlay next fell before the valiant arms of the marshal and his English auxiliaries.[1] During these operations Queen Louise lingered at Ancennis, watching for a favourable opportunity to renew her mediation; as she had greatly at heart the submission of M. de Mercœur, her brother.[2] Henry at this period, however, wrote to the queen thanking her for her past services; but requesting her to desist from mediation:—"Madame, the state of my affairs does not permit me to allow my deputies to amuse themselves in doing nothing. If, by the 1st day of April, my said cousin, de Mercœur, has not taken resolutions in conformity with his duty, my envoys must return: also, Madame, I pray you to quit Ancennis, and not to injure your health by longer sojourn there. I reserve my thanks for your loyal intentions until the time when I have the pleasure of seeing you."[3]

In Provence, in Bretagne, in Picardy, and in Burgundy, the tempest of war muttered. The valiant heart of Henri Quatre rose to meet this last and supreme effort of his foes. Personal defection, however, the king now felt to be his keenest trouble:

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. cxi. Davila. Girard. Dupleix.

[2] "J'ai toujours moins d'esperance que jamais de traicter avec le duc de Mercure, cor j'ay appris par ses lettres addressantes au duc de Mayenne (intercepted) que j'ay prises qu'il n'a permis la conference qui se fait a Ancennis que pour complaire a la royne sa sœur, donner contentement a ceux du pays, et attendre que la dicte dame royne d'Angleterre eut retiré les Anglois."—Lettre de Henri IV. a M. de Beauvoir, State Paper Office, edited by M. de Xivrey.

[3] Lettre du Roy a la Reine Donairière Louise.—Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 6.

but the coldness of Bouillon, the discontent of Biron, and the hostility of the count de Soissons were compensated by the zeal of Rosny, and by the ability of Villeroy and Cheverny—the two latter personages being faithful though not disinterested servants of the crown.

CHAPTER II.

1595.

Declaration of war against Spain—Debates in the States of Artois and Hainault—Commencement of hostilities—Retreat of Mayenne to Dijon—Cabals of the Privy-Council—Arrival of Ambassadors from Venice—Preparations for the Campaign in Burgundy—The king nominates a Council of Administration—Intrigues of M. de Soissons—Harangue of the Parliament of Paris—Reply made by the king—M. de Rosny—He is disliked and dreaded by the ministers and courtiers of the king—Departure of king Henry from Paris—His Arrival at Troyes—Defection of M. de Soissons—The Constable of Castile invades Burgundy—Action of Fontaine Française—Details—Correspondence of the king—His Letter to Madame—Clemency of Henry IV.—He offers amnesty upon certain conditions to the duc de Mayenne—M. de Rosny retires from the council of State—Affair of the Princesse de Condé—Campaign in Picardy—Capture of Ham—The duc d'Aumale—His trial before the Parliament of Paris—Sentenced to decapitation—Suspension of the edict—Combat of Dourlens—Victory declares for the Spaniards—Fall of the Admiral de Villars—Consternation of the royal generals—Aumale holds command in the army of Spain—Publication by the Parliament and Council of the decree of attainder—Execution of the sentence—Le Château d'Anet—Madame d'Aumale—The Chamber proposes the arraignment of the Chieftains of

the League—Flight of Madame de Montpensier from Paris—She is protected by Madame—Negotiations for the submission of the duke de Mayenne—He solicits the intercession of Gabrielle d'Estrées—Terms which he offers to the latter—Siege of Cambray—The Marshal de Balagny and his wife—They seek the protection of Madame de Monceaux—Fall of Cambray—Details.

THE disorders produced by the enterprises of Spain at length determined the king to adopt the bold and decisive measure of declaring war against a power so aggressive and hostile. His resolve was applauded by all loyal subjects. Not content with invading Bretagne and Picardy, the Spanish cabinet fomented revolt, encouraged regicidal attempts, and ostentatiously offered asylum in the Low Countries to malcontents. In concert with the duke de Mayenne the Spanish cabinet actually had partitioned France—for Philip now regarded the cause of the Infanta Doña Isabel as hopeless. In Rome the duke de Sessa and the cardinals Philip's subjects, or pensioners, opposed the royal shrift,[1] ascribing sacrilegious motives for the royal abjuration; and evoking the potent influence of Spain to check friendly advances from his holiness.

In November of the previous year Henry had addressed letters to the states of Artois and Hainault, announcing his resolves; and exhorting the assembly "to interfere and prevent a bloody war, the brunt of which must fall on the Low Countries." The missive was delivered to the archduke Ernest,

[1] With the exception of Cardinal Toleto, "qui proposa au Pape de menacer le roy d'Espagne de l'excommunication s'il persistoit à se roidir contre l'absolution du roy"—writes the Cardinal du Perron. "Je le fus voir un jour, et le trouvay qu'il ecrivoit une lettre au roy d'Espagne fort hardie; et c'etoit beaucoup d'ecrire de la façon au roy d'Espagne, Philippe II."

and after a considerable interval laid before the states assembled in Brussels, by order of his imperial highness. The subsequent discussion was hot and menacing. M. de Mayenne was branded with ignominious epithets for persisting in his revolt after the reconciliation of the king with the church. The deputies plainly expressed their desire for peace with France; and deplored the miseries of the country already ravaged by cruel warfare, and threatened with the descent of the armies of two of the greatest European powers. The archduke managed, however, to qualify the votes of the deputies by appealing to their regard for his catholic majesty; and by expatiating on the indignity to which they would subject king Philip if remonstrances were addressed to him at the behest of the Béarnnois usurper. It was decided, therefore, that fresh application should be made to ascertain the wishes of his catholic majesty.

During this interval the murderous weapon of Jean Châtel was raised against the life of the king; and the Jesuits were expelled from the realm. Public indignation flamed forth against the power supposed to have prompted the attempt; and war with Spain was clamorously demanded. The duke de Bouillon counselled his majesty to act with vigour. "Never will the princes of Nassau, and the oppressed subjects of his catholic majesty, form cordial league with France, unless your majesty shall thus have declared yourself!" said the duke. Bouillon had lately made some sojourn in the Low Countries, whither he repaired as a suitor for the hand of Elizabeth de Nassau, sister of prince Maurice. The fair lady had proved propitious: and Bouillon, endowed with the immense wealth and title of his

deceased consort Charlotte de la Marck, had therefore attained the great object of his ambition—an alliance with a sovereign house.

On the 17th of January, 1595, war was proclaimed.[1] King Henry entered into an elaborate statement of the wrongs and enterprises inflicted on France from the commencement of the reign of Francis II. by the policy of the Hapsburgs. The proclamation concluded by "declaring war against Spain by land and by sea; by prohibiting commercial relations; and by commanding a general onslaught on all Spanish provinces, towns, ports, and substance." This manifesto was received in the Low Countries with derision. The viceroy replied two months after its promulgation by an address, in which king Philip declared his goodwill towards all Frenchmen; and his resolve to protect the faith. His majesty said "that he rigidly respected the treaties made with the late christian kings, and had therefore strictly enjoined his army to help all orthodox and loyal individuals; and especially those who never had intercourse or dealings with Henri de Béarn and his heretics." This manifesto, which was

[1] "Mon Frère, j'ai declaré la guerre au roy d'Espagne le plus tard que j'ai pu, non pour autre consideration que pour ne troubler davantage la Chrestienté. Mais si jamais prince a deu estre excusé de ce faire, je n'en veux pas d'autre juge que vous; ou si après ma conversion à la religion Catholique Apostolique et Romaine, il eut seulement moderé ses aigreurs, j'y eusse aussi usé, en mon endroit, comme j'ai fait envers ceux qui ont tenu ce chemin. Au lieu de le faire, il n'a pas seulement redoublé ses coups contre mon royaume et mes sujets, qu'il semble que luy on les siens aient aussi recherché et veritablement trop curieusement des moyens de me nuire qui tiennent au barbare plus que du Chrestien."—Lettre du roi, au duc de Lorraine, Archives au Royaume de Belgique—edited by M. Gachard. Lettres Missives—Berger de Xivrey.

distributed throughout France, roused keen animosity. Hostilities immediately commenced on the Flemish frontier; where the king's military tactics would have been attended with success, but for the animosity of his generals. Nevers, Bouillon, Villars, and St. Paul—soldiers, the mention of whose names almost implied victory—divided by personal feuds and jealousies, and each wishing to exercise the command-in-chief, materially damaged the royal cause. In reprisal for the military operations of the duke de Bouillon in the duchy of Luxembourg, a province adjacent to his principality of Sedan, the Spaniards crossed the river Meuse and invested La Ferté, under Francisco Verdugo, a captain of repute. The duke de Mayenne, meantime, finding his residence at the vice-regal court irksome, as he there experienced mortifying neglect, resolved to return to France. The advance of Biron into Burgundy, and the submission of the town of Beaune to the king, greatly alarmed Jeannin, first president of the parliament of Dijon, and Mayenne's devoted ally. The president, thereupon, wrote to the duke, stating his fears lest Dijon should capitulate before the royal arms, which as yet had met with no opposition throughout the province; that it was now requisite to concentrate the operations of the league in one section of France; and that no district could afford a more favourable battle-field than Burgundy. Finally, Jeannin adjured the duke to abandon his attitude of supine indifference; and either to make peace with Henri Quatre, or return without delay to France, and use his best efforts to hinder the secession of the duke of Lorraine from the cause. Mayenne accordingly took leave of the archduke,

and repaired to Nancy, escorted by a hundred lances.[1] For several subsequent days the duke of Lorraine refused to grant private audience to his late colleague, fearing to give umbrage to his majesty: but in public exhorted Mayenne to make terms, and to reconcile himself to the king while yet he had some gift to tender worthy of the royal acceptance. He even offered his intercession as Mayenne's kinsman; and proposed, moreover, that the duke should address himself in the first instance to Madame, or to Gabrielle d'Estrées. Mayenne hesitated; but quitted Nancy for Dijon before he found it possible to vanquish his irresolution.[2] This journey was construed by the king to be an intimation of the duke's resolve to persist in his rebellion. Jeannin, who was then in Paris, therefore notified, a few days after the arrival of Mayenne at Dijon, that the king had revoked his previous clement declaration; and now insisted on the unconditional submission of M. de Mayenne and his colleagues, leaders in the late rebellion. Mayenne thereupon despatched M. de Chanvallon to Brussels, to assure the viceroy and the Flemish council of his unalterable resolve to continue the war, and to refuse submission to Le Béarnnois; moreover, if his catholic majesty would afford funds and troops for a cam-

[1] De Thou, liv. 112. "Le duc de Mayenne laissa le duc d'Aumale et le sieur de Rosne en Flandre, et partit de Bruxelles avec quelque gens de cheval, et la compagnie de gens d'armes du Sieur de Villarondan et le regiment de Tremblecourt. Quand le duc entra dans les portes de Dijon l'air qui etoit clair et serein, se trouber par une tempête et orage de pluie, accompagnée d'eclairs, tonnerres, et brandons de feu, tellement que tout le monde fut transpercé de pluie."—Cayet, Chron. Nov. Vie du duc de Mayenne, Archives Curieuses.

[2] Ibid.

paign, he was ready to swear on the holy Gospels never to make peace with the usurper! The war thenceforth was pursued with vindictive determination: while town after town in Burgundy opened its gates to the royal generals, Franche-Comté was ravaged by a division of the army of Lorraine, under MM. de Tremblecourt and d'Aussonville; which perpetrated atrocious deeds of rapine, slaying the inhabitants, and firing every village and homestead on its passage.

The royal arms hitherto had had the ascendancy, so prompt were Henry's movements and able his combinations. Rosny, however, disapproved of an aggressive war; and insisted that the true interest of his royal master was to maintain the defensive. The deference which the king paid to the counsels of Rosny made his majesty hesitate ere he launched his warlike manifesto. Other and not less potent influences, however, were at work to induce Henry to resent the insolent enterprises of Spain. M. de Sancy first gained the ear of madame de Sourdis; and through that lady inspired Gabrielle d'Estrées with the hope that Franche-Comté, wrested from Spain, might be settled in appanage on her little César. The duke de Bouillon, who loved to exercise the power and functions of sovereign state brooded over the conquest of Luxembourg; and advocated a war, which permitted him to make fresh levies of men within his principality, and to retain in his pay the *corps* originally lent to him by the king to garrison Sedan. Montmorency longed to wield his baton as constable; and to ward from Languedoc a Spanish invasion. Villeroy, anxious to witness the total overthrow of the league and its allies, promised to

provide funds: and to cleanse Paris during his majesty's absence from traitors. He moreover observed that two or three brilliant victories would propitiate Clement and his cardinals more than the reception of hundreds of penitential documents from his majesty, supplicating for absolution. During this interval of suspense matters connected with the internal administration of the realm occasioned hot disputes in the council. The edict signed by Henry III. at Poitiers, which had been promulgated and declared the ecclesiastical code of the realm as concerning catholic and protestant, met with steady opposition when presented for registration to the parliament of Paris. The debates occupied several days; the most bitter concession made to "Huguenoterie," being, in the opinion of MM. de la Cour, the permission given by the edict to persons professing the reformed faith to become members of the States-General. Efforts were made to procure the erasure of this obnoxious clause. The malcontents ranged themselves under the leadership of the attorney-general, Jacques du Gnesle. Notwithstanding the pertinacious opposition organized, a vote for the registration of the edict without limitation was carried on the 6th of February, by a majority of six persons.[1] Bouillon and other influential members

[1] The opinion of some of the chief members were thus expressed: "M. Briçonnot dit qu'on n'avait pas coutûme de verifier tels edits que quand on voyait une armée de Reistres. M. Levoix dit qu'en verifiant cette declaration il falloit craindre qu'on ne dit: *canis ad vomitum*. M. Lejau fut d'avis de faire remontrances à sa majesté, et un an après mariage des deux religions. M. Raucher dit que l'edit do 1577 n'etoit qu'une feuille de papier écrite que le feu roy avoit baillée aux Huguenots pour les contenter en papier."

demonstrated great indignation at the speeches, and at the hostility evinced by du Guesle; who, they averred, being a servant of the crown, ought not to have opined against an edict sanctioned in council by his royal master. The gloom and depression prevalent during the first months of the year 1595 were augmented by the rigour of the weather, and the deaths which occurred from the ravages of famine and fever. Districts which, during the siege of Paris and subsequently, had been decimated by plague, were again declared infected. Great injury was likewise done by tempests of rain and hail; while hurricanes swept over the capital, and demolished many newly-constructed houses and streets. His majesty, while hunting in the neighbourhood of Vincennes with Gabrielle d'Estrées, was caught in one of these storms; and the thunder and vivid lightning greatly alarmed Madame la Marquise.[1]

The court was somewhat enlivened, before the commencement of the Lenten season, by the arrival in Paris of the Venetian ambassage sent to congratulate the king on the reduction of Paris. The Serene Republic was the first catholic power which recognized the rights of Henri IV. Mocenigo, the Venetian ambassador, therefore had been treated with the utmost distinction—a preference flatteringly acknowledged by Venice. The senate, therefore, nominated Vincenzo Gradenigo a noble Venetian, the cavaliere Delfino, and Francisco Duodo, to compliment his majesty on his victories. The ambassadors were received on the frontier by M. de Lesdiguiéres. Their journey was defrayed by Henry,

[1] Gabrielle d'Estrées hunted in a light green habit, with cap and black plume. The habit was embroidered with symbols of the chase.

who nominated the duke de Bellegarde, the historian de Thou, and André Hurault son of the chancellor Cheverny, to meet and escort the envoys into Paris. From the king the ambassadors met with a distinguished reception. Henry proudly acknowledged the *prestige* and aid accruing to his cause from the friendship of the republic; and promised to defend the interest of Venice, as he did that of France. In the evening Madame received the ambassadors. A grand festivity ensued, which the envoys greatly enjoyed; and, according to the instructions of the politic senate, Gradenigo paid marked homage to Gabrielle d'Estrées, and assured her of the *bienveillance* of the Venetians. The ambassadors made brief sojourn in Paris, as Lent was approaching, and the king desired to conduct them on their road back to Italy as far as his favourite Fontainebleau.[1] No sooner was the royal intention known, than a clamour arose in Paris that the king wished to avoid the ceremonies of that holy season, which he was about to devote at Fontainebleau to Calvinistic impieties. The murmurs became so prevalent, aggravated by the imprudent deportment of the chaplains of the household of Madame,[2] that the cardinal-bishop of Paris waited upon his majesty humbly to beseech Henry not to leave the capital. "The populace is a fool, which allows itself to be led by the nose hither

[1] De Thou, liv. 112. Journal de Henri IV. Mém. de Cheverny.

[2] "Tous les Dimanches on prechoit publiquement dans le logis de Madame, et les Mercredis et Vendredis dans le Louvre; et etoient les ministres ordinaires, Lafaye, Montigni, Fugré et la Cerisaie. Benôit, curè de Saint Eustache, se remua le plus; mais Madame l'ayant envoyé querir pour cet effet lui en ferma la bouche."—Journal de Henri IV. Benôit was confessor to the king.

and thither—and especially these said Parisians. I will not, however, leave Paris; and my devotions, at your request, shall be seen by all!" was his majesty's hasty reply to Gondy. Shrove Tuesday was celebrated with the usual license and revelry. The king and court made a progress through the capital. In the evening the duke de Guise, MM. de Bellegarde and de Vitry with a band of cavaliers masked, took a wild foray through the streets, committing outrages, entering houses to the great alarm of peaceable citizens; and ending their *escapade* at the Foire de St. Germain, where they remained until dawn. The following day, Ash Wednesday, the sale of meat was prohibited during Lent. Other regulations were also issued to restrain the zealous ministrations of Madame's chaplains. Nevertheless, on Easter Sunday the crowd was so great in the chapel attached to the private residence of the princess that no one, save her highness, could be accommodated with a seat.

During the following two months, April and May 1595, preparations for carrying on the war were pursued with activity. The archduke Ernest, during the interval which had elapsed since the proclamation of war, having fallen a victim to a severe and long-standing malady,[1] had been succeeded temporarily in the viceregal functions by the Conde de Fuentes. The hostilities in Franche-Comté, meanwhile, exasperated the Spanish government, which

[1] "Les Historiens Espagnols disent que la cause de la mort de l'archiduc fut une pierre qu'il avoit aux lombes. Les Hollandais ont ecrit qu'il mourut de regret de voir aller toutes choses au contraire de ce qu'il s'etoit proposé."——"L'arciduca Ernesto quale mentre cerca di remediar più tosto à disordini, ritrouvati nelle cose del Ré, che di fare acquisti contra i nemici, venne a morte, a pena finito l'anno del suo gouverno." Bentivoglio.—Relatione delle Provincie Unite di Flandra, lib. 2.

was now made in its turn to feel the horrors and inconvenience of invasion. The war in Flanders rendered it impossible for Fuentes to withdraw troops to defend Franche-Comté; for the aggressive warfare on the frontiers of Picardy aided greatly the designs of Prince Maurice and the rebels of the Low Countries. Yet, for the preservation of that province—the last relic of the heritage of the dukes of Burgundy—and to save the remnant of the once mighty league, the Spanish cabinet felt the necessity of opposing the victorious career of Biron. Already Autun, Dijon, the capital of the province, Nuits, and Beaune, had submitted to the royal authority.

Mayenne in dismay had retired to Châlons-sur Saône, the only town which still adhered to the Union; while his lieutenant, the Viscount de Tavannes, was straitly besieged in the citadel of Dijon. To recapture the town of Dijon, and to drive the royal generals from Franche-Comté, was a mission therefore intrusted to the governor of the Milanese, Don Fernando de Valasco, constable of Castile. At the head of 8000 foot and 2000 horse Velasco traversed Savoy, entered Franche-Comté, and laid siege to Vesoul. The constable was joined by the duke of Mayenne and a small body of adherents; though so insignificant did these auxiliaries appear to the haughty Spaniard, that he refused to treat the duke as his equal in command, and consulted him on nothing.[1] Biron, thereupon, aware of the inspiriting effect of Henry's presence with his army, wrote pressing letters to his majesty, entreating him to take the supreme command. The martial spirit of Henri Quatre had long been kindling; and without ap-

[1] Mém. de Sully. Decade de Henri IV.—Le Grand. Péréfixe—Hist. de Henri le Grand.

pearing to observe the gloomy countenance of Rosny, Henry made ready for departure. The king nominated a council which he invested with supreme control over the finances; and over all matters connected with the internal administration of the realm during his absence. The members were chosen from the chief personages of the privy-council, with the addition of M. de Rosny; whom Henry insisted on nominating, despite the displeasure of the intended colleagues of the latter. The count de Soissons resorted to every device to obtain the office of president of the newly-organized council; and even condescended to visit the hôtel Schomberg to ask the powerful co-operation of Madame la Marquise. The king, however, was too distrustful of the intentions of M. de Soissons to leave the latter in Paris invested with supreme power, and in the society of Madame. One day, therefore, whilst the king was dining surrounded by the court, he announced his intention to confer the office of president of the council on the prince de Conty; whose infirm health and halting speech were sufficient guarantees for the loyal discharge of his functions. "As for you, *mon cousin*," continued the king, addressing the count de Soissons, "your martial prowess I know rejoices only in war. You shall attend our person. Organize, therefore, your regiment, and follow us into Burgundy."

Soissons made obeisance, not daring to respond, so infinitely was he exasperated and mortified.[1] The following day, May 27th, the members of the court of parliament presented a farewell address to the king in the hall of the Louvre. Certain pecuniary edicts had greatly irritated the senators; especially

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 7ème. Journal de Henri IV.

one, which ordained that the much-abhorred Rentes de l'Hôtel de Ville should, for the present, be chargeable on the city treasury. Funds for the campaign, moreover, had been raised by the creation of officers to receive escheats due to the crown throughout the provinces; for which posts large sums had been paid into the treasury—an invasion of the functions of La Chambre des Comptes. Mingled with lamentations, therefore, on the departure of the king, were sundry daring rebukes on the late financial enterprises sanctioned by his majesty. In his addresses to the members of his High Courts, the language employed by Henri IV. is often more emphatic than gracious. "Messieurs," said the king to his parliament, "the words which issue from my lips are engraven on my heart. I am about to depart for my army, with most insufficient equipage, thanks to your delays. Three hostile armies are in my realm; I will nevertheless meet, and vanquish them. Remember that I have restored you to your homes. I took you from poor and mean abodes and installed you in my Palais de Justice. Attend therefore to the duties of your high office; be as solicitous for the public weal as you show yourselves careful for your private interests. Frenchmen, you know, love only that which they see; when I shall have departed from amongst you, you probably may no longer care for me. Be vigilant, and arrest the poison of discord, so that it may not circulate to our heart. France I liken to a strong man—Paris is his heart. God will enable me to drive back the foe; then I will return and hold the *lit de justice* which you desire."[1] To the members of his Chambre des Comptes Henry's address was still more abrupt and dry. Alluding

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. de Béth. fol. 128.

to the edict relative to the escheats,[1] his majesty observed: "New edicts are invariably odious. I have sanctioned this one with regret. Nevertheless, knowing my will, you ought not to have opposed obstacles. For several years past it is a marvel how my *gendarmerie* has subsisted: I have therefore been obliged to resort to extraordinary means. The edict has been revised and approved by myself and my council; and perhaps you will allow that we have wit enough to discern that which is likely to benefit the realm. If, indeed, you would each of you make me a spontaneous offer of two or three thousand crowns; or that you each authorize me to appropriate your respective salaries, we might then speak of annulling this obnoxious edict. You doubtless deem your remonstrances very meritorious; but after all your fine words and speeches you each return to your luxury and your ease, and take no heed to render practicable your patriotic statements!"[2] The rude logic of their sovereign during the early years of his reign often disconcerted the MM. de la Cour. The king, however, seldom resented a remonstrance; he spoke his opinion freely, and his severest rebuffs merged occasionally into a jest: but Henry never desisted from a resolve once matured.

Henry quitted Paris at the end of May for Fontainebleau. He was attended by M. de Rosny, whom the king honoured by a brief sojourn at his château de Muret. This favour disquieted Rosny's colleagues of the council; who, throughout the royal absence,

[1] Tresoriers provinciaux des Parties Casuelles, was the appellation of the new officers.

[2] Archives du Royaume—Section domaniale—Chambre de Comptes—Registres de l'Année 1595, fol. 168—edited by M. Berger de Xivrey—Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.

persisted in a series of petty and ungenerous persecutions towards the former. The manner of M. de Rosny wanted suavity; and his tongue lacked the power of saying those flattering things which perhaps might have rendered his rise less rugged. His princely colleagues affected to look down upon the pretensions of Béthune, and to despise the Huguenot—more in revenge for the irony of the tone often adopted by Rosny; and to mortify, as they believed, his intense self-appreciation, than from any real feeling of hostility.

The king arrived at Troyes on the 29th of May. His majesty there learned the capture of Vesoul, by the constable de Velasco; also, that the latter was preparing to cross the Saône, to advance for the relief of the citadel of Dijon. Letters were likewise brought to his majesty from Biron and Montmorency, detailing the progress of the war; and apprizing the king of the retreat of the duke de Nemours, who had refused to serve under his brother Mayenne. The king imparted the intelligence to the nobles composing his staff; adding, that on the morrow he should depart for Dijon, where Montmorency would give him *rendezvous*. At this anxious period M. de Soissons chose to demonstrate resentment. In order to indulge it he asked the king, whether it was the royal intention to bestow upon him, as grand-master, the supreme command of the armies of France—his majesty, and Montmorency, the constable, not being present? No proposition could have occasioned more perplexity, as M. de Soissons well knew. The tried ability of Biron would have been ill rewarded by being placed under the command of a young prince, as yet distinguished only for extra-

ordinary bodily strength[1] and querulous temper. Henry, therefore, emphatically replied in the negative; upon which M. de Soissons announced his resolve to retire to his château of Blandy, and take no part in the campaign. "It is impossible for me to live in good fellowship with M. de Soissons," wrote the king to Rosny; "never have I been able to keep the said count in good humour for two months together. I doubt not that he has courage, or he would belie his race; he may be actuated by loyal sentiments; nevertheless, he always times his pretensions so badly, as to inflict upon me infinitely more harm than good."[2] Henry seldom seems to trouble himself much respecting the spiteful retaliations of M. de Soissons; though such conduct had the effect of inducing the king to interdict still more peremptorily his alliance with Madame.

On the first of June the king journeyed to Dijon, being preceded by the count de Montigny and 1000 horse. The king was attended by the dukes de Guise and de la Tremouille, the marquis de Mirabeau, the count d'Auvergne, the marquis de Pisani, and MM. de Vitry, de Liancour Beaumont, de Cheverny, and others. His reception in Dijon was enthusiastic, and the siege of the citadel, which still held for the league, was pursued with ardour. His majesty, after his arrival, held conference with Biron and other experienced officers. It was then unanimously resolved to arrest the advance of the Spanish army upon Dijon; and even to prevent Velasco from

[1] The count de Soissons though small of stature, was a man of prodigious strength. At the battle of Coutras the count seized several of the most noted champions of the royal army by the waist, and hurled them from their horses.

[2] Mém. de Sully, t. 1. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. fr. fol. 1009.

crossing the Burgundian frontier. Early the following morning the king departed for Lux, a château distant about lour leagues. From thence Henry sent forwards M. d'Aussonville with 100 horse, to reconnoitre and ascertain the position of the Spanish army. The king directed d'Aussonville to meet him at three o'clock, at the village of Fontaine-Françoise; where his majesty also gave *rendezvous* at the same hour to the *corps d'armée* selected for this expedition, with the intent of forming an entrenched camp at St. Seine, a village of the frontier, on the river Vigenne. The bulk of the royal army halted in the vicinity of Dijon, waiting the result of the *reconnaissance*, which Henry had insisted on making in person. The king remained at the château de Lux for two hours; and from thence sent forwards the marquis de Mirabeau with sixty horse, to prepare quarters at Fontaine. Henry then mounted his horse, and, attended by Biron and the baron de Lux, and an escort of 300 men, rode leisurely in the same direction. About a league from Fontaine, three soldiers suddenly appeared flying *à toute bride*. The men reported that d'Aussonville had been attacked by a column, supposed to be the van of the army of the league. The king, thereupon, despatched Biron with 200 men to cover the retreat; meantime, Henry imprudently crossed the Vigenne, and being ignorant, as it is supposed, of the vicinity of the invading army, proceeded to make his survey. Biron arrived at Fontaine without encountering the enemy. On a hill, which rose between Fontaine and the village of St. Seine, the marshal, however, descried a body of the enemy, consisting of not more than fifty men, apparently, also, occupied in reconnoitring. Biron charged these soldiers and put them to flight;

when, from the position thus won, he beheld the Spanish army marching in battle array across the plain, evidently also bearing down upon St. Seine.[1] A column of 400 horse preceded the main army, which was in hot pursuit of a body of French cavaliers—the corps under Aussonville. Biron, meantime, had fortunately been joined by the marquis de Mirabeau. The chieftains drew up their troops for conflict; as the Spaniards, on descrying the detachments under Biron, left the pursuit of Aussonville, and advanced to assail the new foe. The marshal divided his men into three squadrons of 100 soldiers each, and prepared to arrest the advance of the enemy, hoping to allow the king time to escape from the peril which menaced him. A desperate skirmish ensued; the Spanish cavalry furiously assaulted the division commanded by Biron, who was immediately recognized. The marshal, not anticipating conflict, wore only a cuirass; and having neither shield nor helmet, he received a severe sabre wound on the head. The baron de Lux was thrown from his horse, and wounded with a pike; while the marquis de Mirabeau fell bleeding and exhausted. Victory, nevertheless, remained equally balanced; but a fresh body of Spanish cavalry issuing from a wood which skirted St. Seine, Biron retreated towards Fontaine-Françoise; where he believed the king, with all the reinforcements which were there to *rendezvous*, must by this time have arrived.

In the Spanish army the utmost panic prevailed.

[1] Cayet—Chron. Nov. De Thou, liv. 112. Péréfixe, Mathieu, Le Grain, D'Aubigné, and numerous MS. authorities in the Bibl. Imp. Fonds de Béthune, Dupuy, and de Harlay. Coloma—Guerras de los Estados Baxos liv. 7, 8. Barcelona. 1627.

Like the duke of Parma at the Journée d'Aumale, Velasco dreaded an ambuscade, and expressed his belief that Henry and his army waited them in the plain of Fontaine; and that these skirmishers were but decoys to draw him to wage combat. The constable, therefore, refused to break the main ranks of his army:—"I am here, Monseigneur, to defend his catholic majesty's province of Franche-Comté. Do what you will with your own cavalry, and with the light horse of the van already engaged," replied Velasco, to the solicitations of the duke de Mayenne. The latter then requested that these corps should be reinforced by a division of Spanish carabineers, under the valiant Giovan Sansoni, second lieutenant. Velasco gave grudging consent. Mayenne, with this succour, and at the head of the French cavalry commanded by MM. de Thianges and de Villers, joined the squadrons already in pursuit of the royal detachments, and bore down upon Fontaine-Francoise.

The king, meanwhile, had arrived at Fontaine, where he found only 260 horse and a few personages, the chiefest of his staff—for the hour fixed for the *rendezvous* had not yet struck. Fugitives presently appeared, breathless with the evil tidings of the retreat of Biron, who, they said, was pursued by the entire Spanish army. The nobles then gathered round the king and entreated him to fly to a sure refuge, representing the hopelessness of so unequal a conflict. Henry put aside his importunate advisers—"Messieurs, flight is more dangerous than to hunt this *canaille!*[1] *Allons!* we will turn the

[1] Mathieu, t. 2, liv. 1. Cayet. Cabrera—Felipe II. The king's daring, nevertheless, met with strong protest from his subjects. "Voyons," says the author of 'Une Remontrance

fortune of the day!" His majesty then sent forwards 100 men[1] to meet and support Biron, and himself set out with his little troop of 150 cavaliers. Soon Biron's division came in sight, closely pursued by Mayenne and his cavalry. No sooner had the fresh succour reached the fugitives than, infected by the panic, it turned and joined the headlong flight; and the entire detachment came pouring down upon the king and his troop. Indignation inspired Henry with heroic courage. He spurred his horse, and dashed forwards alone to meet the fugitives, calling upon the officers and men by name to make a stand. The well-known voice acted with magical power on the soldiers—a halt was instantly made. Henry called the Marshal de Biron—who had just received a second wound in the side from a halberd—and, with the aid of the latter, divided the troops into two divisions. The dukes de la Tremouille and d'Elbœuf placed themselves at the head of one division; while Henry, with Biron, Mirabeau, and other of his valiant nobles, commanded the other. His majesty then led this little army straight back upon its pursuers. The first charge was sanguinary and hotly contested. "I then fought," said the king, "for precious life, and not as aforetimes for victory."[2] Squad-

envoyée au roi par un de ses meilleurs serviteurs,' "si votre majesté n'a pas plutôt merité le nom de soldat que de capitaine: autres sont les vertus d'un roy; autres celles d'un gendarme."—M. de Villeroy, t. 8.

[1] The succour of 100 men sent by Henry was commanded by Aussonville, who had previously encountered the foe. Davila, lib. 14. Monarquia de España—Salazer de Mendoza, lib. 5, p. 264.

[2] "Les ducs de la Tremouille et d'Elbœuf se joignirent ensemble pour abattre la rosée devant sa majesté."—D'Aubigné, t. 3. Cayet.

ron after squadron of the van of the Spanish army advanced to the charge, each being broken by the invincible valour of Henry and his cavaliers. Sansoni was slain; M. de Villers had his right arm fractured by a ball. Biron, covered with wounds, fought valiantly by the side of his royal master. Meanwhile, the sound of the fight and the reports of fugitives soon brought the king an accession of strength. The count d'Auvergne and Vitry came up first with a company of light horse; followed by the count de Cheverny, the chevalier d'Oyse, and other officers with their divisions. Having now sufficiently vindicated his honour, Henry resolved to extricate his little army, which was constantly in danger of being surrounded by the constable of Castile. The king, therefore, feeling his present inability to engage with the main body of the enemy, commenced a retreat in admirable order towards the spot where the fight first commenced. Two powerful squadrons of French cavalry on observing the movement, made as if they would intercept this retreat.[1] The royal army promptly reformed, and again offered battle. Another reinforcement met the king about a league from Fontaines. The enemy therefore withdrew; remembering the opinion of

[1] The king writes to Mornay an animated relation of the combat, though his majesty said, that he did not boast in order not to follow the example of the Spaniards, who made "d'une mouche un éléphant:" "Moins de 200 chevaux ont empeché, sans aucun ruisseau entre eux, une armée de 10,000 hommes et de 2000 chevaux d'entrer dans mon royaume: ont mis en route 2000 chevaux à la tête de tout le reste de l'armée; et à la veue seule de 500 chevaux, toute la dicte armée a quitté le champ de bataille." Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 11, p. 568, édit. in 4to.

Velasco that the fight was "a stratagem to draw them into the plain," beyond the Saône. Velasco and his soldiers had remained grim spectators of the conflict. The Spanish soldiers, excited by the feats they witnessed, were with difficulty prevented from joining in the combat; especially, when they beheld the van of their army broken and flying before a handful of men. The stern voice of the constable of Castile, however, was heard ordering each liegeman of Spain to ground his arms, and retire to his quarters. The following day Velasco decamped from the vicinity of Fontaine Françoise; and declaring that his mission was to defend Franche-Comté, and not to encounter the king, the constable refused to send succour to Dijon, and entrenched himself in the town of Gray.

Henry notified his victorious encounter to the parliaments of his realm. He also wrote the following letter to Madame Catherine:—

King Henry IV. to Madame Catherine.[1]

"MA CHERE SŒUR—The more I reflect upon, the greater is my thankfulness for the mercy vouchsafed me by God during the fight of Monday last. It was my first belief that I had defeated only 1,200 horse; but now I find that 2,000 is the most probable computation. The constable of Castile and the duke de Mayenne were present; both these said personages saw and recognized me well—I have ascertained this fact from several prisoners captured; and from heralds subsequently despatched to me. The enemy sent me a list of Spanish and Italian captains, whom it was wished to exchange;

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1595. Lettres Missives de Henri IV.—Berger de Xivrey, t. 4.

but as these persons are not amongst my prisoners, they must have been slain and interred on the field, as I commanded to be done on the following day. Many of my young cavaliers, seeing me fight at their head, showed valiant spirit, and behaved with admirable bravery. I remarked the courage of Grammont, Termes, Boissy, La Curée,[1] and the marquis de Mirabeau, who all fought without other armour than a gorget and breastplate. Others there were who demeaned themselves not so gallantly; many comported themselves ill. All who were not by my side ought to be inspired with poignant regret: there was enough to do at this crisis for all my friends; for, m'amye, you were very near becoming my heiress! I am now before this castle,[2] which the enemy intended to relieve after uniting his forces. God has given me a mighty advantage; and my enemies will now have enough to do to defend themselves, instead of assailing me. I am very well in health, God be praised; and I love you as myself.

"HENRY."

Such was the renowned fight of Fontaine-Françoise—one the most perilous that Henry had engaged in; being also the conflict from which results of the greatest magnitude ensued. It afterwards was a favourite boast with the king, that with a few hundred horsemen he had barred the entrance into his kingdom to an army of 10,000 foot and 2,000 horse! and his majesty wrote to that effect to M. de Mornay.[3]

[1] "Le roy eut le jugement si ferme en la chaleur du combat que voyant partir de la main un gendarme, il jugea que le coup allait sur la Curée, et cria 'Garde Curée!'"—Mathieu, Hist. du Règne de Henri IV.

[2] The citadel of Dijon—the town of Dijon was occupied by the royal troops.

[3] Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 11.

The exultation of the king was great at this glorious exploit; and he despatched letters containing animated descriptions of the fight to all his favoured servants. He writes two long letters to Montmorency, whose patent of constable of France received the royal signature at Dijon. "Hang yourself, Harambure," wrote his majesty, "because you were not with me at the last great fight, where we fought as if possessed."[1] The king often alludes to the slash on the head received by Biron;[2] but nowhere recounts that the marshal's life was especially in peril; or that he had interposed for the rescue of the latter, as is commonly asserted.[1] The king returned the following day, Tuesday, June 6th, to Dijon, where, on the news of the retreat of the Spanish army, the citadel made immediate capitulation. Henry then took up his abode for a brief period in Dijon. His majesty re-installed the municipal authorities and the ancient parliament, which, at the commencement of the troubles, had been translated to Flavigny. Henry's impulses, even in his first elation after having repulsed a formidable invasion, were generous and merciful. After the conflict of Fontaine Françoise the Spaniards showed the greatest contempt for their French allies of the league. The gates of Gray, by command of the constable of Castile, were closed on their sick and wounded; even M. de Villers was left behind in the miserable village of St.

[1] Valori—Journal Militaire de Henri IV. Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.

[2] "Mon cousin le marechal de Biron a été blessé à la tête d'un coup de coutelas à la seconde charge; car lui et moi n'avions rien que nos cuirasses, pour n'avoir eu loisir de nous armer davantage. Dieu nous a assisté et favorisé extraordinairement. Au Connétable, MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl., f. 1009.

Seine—gangrene having already set in around the wound on his arm—without provisions, or surgical aid. Henry, on hearing of this desertion, sent his own surgeon to Villers, and offered to transport him to any place he might indicate; or to grant him a free pardon, provided that he returned to his allegiance. The common soldiers were also well cared for by the king; and those who recovered entered the royal service. The personage most to be commiserated in these reverses was the duke de Mayenne. His consternation was such that for an interval his faculties seemed affected. M. de Jeannin, the duke's latest and most faithful counsellor, had no word of comfort or advice: the president seemed lost in admiration at the valour of the king, against which, he emphatically declared, "no person could compete." The first thought of Mayenne was to gain the town of Châlons, the only place which remained to him in Burgundy. If chance favoured the duke, and he succeeded in reaching Châlons, for the perils were manifold, the next exploit of the royal army would doubtless be to invest this, his sole refuge; when, as M. Jeannin observed, the fall of the town and his capture was a matter of certainty. Mayenne next meditated on the expediency of departing to plead his cause before Philip II. Velasco, however, discouraged the project; he contemptuously reminded the duke that both Don Juan de Taxis and the duke de Feria, his sworn foes, were members of the Spanish privy-council; and that unsuccessful rebels were never welcome visitants at the courts of great princes. The last resource of the unlucky Mayenne was therefore a retreat to the court of Turin; but while he was pondering on this step the magnanimous forbearance of Henri IV. afforded unexpected

rescue. His majesty issued commands to M. de Lignerac, aide-de-camp to the duke de Mayenne, to visit him at Dijon. This mandate was thankfully obeyed. Henry then sent the following message to the fallen duke: "Tell M. de Mayenne not to be longer duped by the treacherous promises of Spain; I pity his isolation, and I remember that he is a prince nearly allied to my crown. Say that I permit him to retire to Châlons, there to consider the propriety of his prompt submission to my authority. I promise not to molest him on the road to Châlons, nor to besiege him when resident there; provided that the said duke presumes not to quit the town, even for a day, until I give him licence."[1] Lignerac departed, and forthwith delivered his message. The duke accepted the clement offer of the king; and withdrew from the grudging hospitalities of the constable of Castile, who still remained entrenched at Gray. The duke wrote a grateful letter to Henry; and requested that the articles of his reconciliation with the king might be forthwith proposed to Jeannin, by Villeroy.

This latter, with the chancellor Cheverny, had joined Henry at Dijon to aid in restoring and reforming the various local courts of the duchy. The council established by Henry before he quitted Paris had done little else than cabal over matters of finance and etiquette. The visit which Henry paid to Rosny on his way to Dijon increased the feeling of jealous anger amongst the colleagues of the latter. A conspiracy, therefore, was concocted to drive Rosny from his post during his majesty's absence—

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps, liv. 112, année 1595. Davila, Hist., liv. 14. Vie du duc de Mayenne—Antoine de Nervèze.

an abandonment of duty which it was believed the king would never pardon, even when committed by his favourite: or else to compel Rosny to submit to mortifying indignity.[1] The president of the council, M. de Conty, found himself totally unable to control his colleagues. The stammering tongue of the prince was no match for the ribald fluency of M. de Sancy. The members of the council, therefore, for several successive mornings met privately in the chamber of Sancy; where, having agreed upon various measures of finance and general policy, they entered the council chamber, and insolently requested M. de Rosny to set his signature to such decree; which they laid before him ready drawn and authenticated. Rosny, however, was not to be so intimidated. He quietly rejected the document, upon which his opinion never had been requested; and a few hours subsequently quitted Paris for his château of Muret. When Rosny had departed the majority of members began to reflect on the opinion likely to be expressed by his majesty on their proceeding. Madame Catharine, who had no reason to like Rosny, looked grave; while Gabrielle d'Estrées, then on the eve of departure to join the king, expressed her surprise with unusual significance of manner. It was therefore deemed politic by the schemers to attempt to lure back Rosny to Paris. A messenger was despatched, the bearer of the regrets of MM. du Conseil at the misunderstanding which had occurred; and to request the presence of Rosny at an approaching deliberation relative to the war on the Flemish frontiers. Rosny returned a courteous reply; but excused himself from

[1] Mém. de Sully—liv. 7ème.

sharing in the consultations of the council until after his majesty's happy return.

Whilst the king was at Dijon, he received a petition from Charlotte Catharine de la Tremouille princess de Condé, praying to be released from her rigorous prison at St. Jean d'Angely; and that the sentence of decapitation pronounced against her in 1588, for the alleged assassination of her husband, Henri I., prince de Condé, might be annulled, as illegal and unjust. The princess had been accused by two servants of the deceased prince while under torture, of complicity in the crime of Belcastel, her fugitive page; who, it was said, had poisoned his master. The reason assigned for the crime was an intrigue between Madame de Condé and her page Belcastel,[1] during the absence of her husband; which, had Condé lived, must have been betrayed by the pregnancy of the princess, and the

[1] The king relates the affair to Madame de Guiche in the following words, which seem to imply his suspicions of the crime and relation of Madame de Condé with her page Belcastel: —"Brillant" (the servant put to the torture) "est un homme que Madame la princesse a mis en la maison, et luy faisoit tout gouverner. Il fut tout soudain prins. Confesse avoir bailli 1000 écus au page, et luy avoir acheté des chevaux par le commandement de sa maitresse pour aller en Italie. Le second (domestique) confirme; et dit de plus qu'on avoit fait écrire une lettre à ce Brillant au valet de chambre qu'on savoir être à Poitiers, par où il mandoit être a 200 pas de la porte; qu'il voulait parlait a luy. L'autre sortit: soudain l'embusquade qu'étoit là le print, et le mena à St. Jean. Il n'avoit encore été oui; mais bien disait-il à ceux qui le menoient: Ah! que Madame est mechante! Voilà ce qu'on en sait à cette heure Souvenez vous de ce que je vous ai dit d'autres fois. Je ne me trompe guère en mes jugements. C'est une dangereuse bête qu'une mauvaise femme!"—Lettre de Henri IV. à Madame de Guiche, Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. 2289. Mercure de France, année 1765.

disavowal by the prince of her expected offspring. The affair at the time caused intense excitement; and as it affected the legitimacy of the young prince de Condé, as first prince of the blood, and consequently the rank of M. de Conty, the presentation of the petition to his majesty roused the old rancorous enmities and cabals. The petition was presented to the king in council by the duke de la Tremouille, brother of the princess de Condé; and it was also authenticated by the signatures of eight of the most illustrious personages of the realm, including Montmorency, who attested on their honour, that they believed the princess innocent of the charge. Madame de Brissembourg, the lady who had been in constant attendance upon the princess during her incarceration, reported also the constancy and fervour with which Madame de Condé endured her prison, and protested her innocence. This lady was aunt and foster-mother to the Marshal de Biron, whose influence was therefore also enlisted. Whatever the royal opinion might be relative to the guilt of the illustrious culprit, the political interest of the king was certainly involved in the recognition of the innocence of the princess. The rights of the young Condé, whilst Henry had no legitimate offspring, repressed the ambitious aspirations of M. de Soissons. The rescue of the infant prince from the power of the Protestant synod of La Rochelle, was a condition pertinaciously insisted upon by the agents of pope Clement, as one of the preliminaries of Henry's much-solicited absolution. The princess de Condé, moreover, intimated that seclusion had opened her eyes to the fallacy of the reformed tenets; and that, if liberty and opportunity were given her, she was willing eventually to em-

brace the orthodox creed. His majesty therefore annulled the sentence of the former judges of the princess; and granted letters of evocation to transfer cognizance of the affair to the parliament of Paris, before which tribunal all former depositions were to be examined. The august personages who had signed the memorial rendered themselves responsible for the due appearance of Madame de Condé, to answer for the crime alleged against her. A royal warrant was next addressed to M. de Rochebaucourt, commanding him to deliver the custody of the princess and her son to the marquis de Pisani; whom Henry a few weeks subsequently despatched to St. Jean d'Angely to escort the illustrious captive to Paris.[1]

The war in Picardy during the campaign in Burgundy was waged without respite. The conde de Fuentes[2] showed himself an enterprising and able leader. The aim of the viceroy was to signalize his tenure of power by the recapture of Cambray and its territory; and to avenge the incursions of Bouillon in Luxembourg. The Spaniards held possession of three forts—La Fêre, La Capelle, and Ham—which were regarded as the keys of the Cambresis. At the commencement of the year Fuentes had seized the citadel of Ham, after a flagrant breach of faith to one M. de Gomeron, a subject of the king.

[1] De Thou, liv. 112. Procedures et autres actes intervenus en la poursuite criminelle contre dame Charlotte Catherine de la Tremouille, Princesse de Condé, avec l'arrêt du Parlement, qui la declare innocente.—Bibl. Imp. F. de Brienne, 186—also Registres du Parlement de Paris. Fragments of these documents are printed in Les Preuves du Journal de Henri IV., par l'Etoile, t. 3.

[2] Don Enrique de Guzman, son and heir of the Conde de Alba de Liste.

Avarice was the besetting passion of this M. de Gomeron. The Spaniards played upon his foible by tempting proposals to purchase, as they termed it, the citadel of Ham; and Gomeron was persuaded to repair to Brussels in order that the intended transaction might be authenticated by the sign-manual of the viceroy.[1] He fell into the snare and was arrested; while a strong Spanish garrison entered Ham, capturing the wife of Gomeron and her father, M. d'Orvilliers, who were detained as prisoners in the fort. The latter, thirsting for revenge, opened secret relations with M. de St. Paul and the duke de Bouillon, with the view to admit a division of the royal army, strong enough to overpower the Spaniards of the garrison. St. Paul, Bouillon, and the marquis d'Humières entered into the design with alacrity; and immediate measures were adopted for its execution. The affair could not, however, be kept so secret but a rumour of the enterprise came to the ears of the marquis de Trevico, commandant of the Neapolitan regiments, which chiefly composed the garrison. The attempt was made on the night of Thursday, June 22nd. The assault having in some measure been anticipated, the garrison made sturdy defence. The carnage was great; and the royal generals, St. Paul, Bouillon, and Humières, fought side by side with their soldiers. Twice were the royal troops repulsed; districts of the city were fired; and every street and public building became the scene of a sanguinary conflict. At length the discipline and valour of the French prevailed: the town was captured, and every Spaniard in the place

[1] "Le Gouverneur de Ham est demeuré d'accord avec les ministres du Roi d'Espagne de leur livrer la place pour 25,000 ecus."—Lettres d'Ossat—Lettre 24, année 1595.

massacred. The city was given up by the duke de Bouillon to pillage. Fearful excesses were perpetrated, in revenge for the death of the marquis d'Humières; who fell during the fight, shot through the head by a musket. D'Humières was generally lamented; he possessed riches and a valiant spirit, potent elements of popularity in these troublous times. The marquis signed himself lord of sixty fair manors. His career, nevertheless, had been clouded by the cruel murder of his wife; whom he drowned in the lake of the park attached to his castle in Picardy, on suspicion of her *liaison* with M. de Simiers. Humières was apparently deeply regretted by the king. When news of the capture of Ham, and of the death of the marquis, were communicated to Henry, tears gushed from his eyes. "I have lost Humières!—Ham costs me dear! I would give many similar trongholds for a man of his capacity!"[1]

In Paris the slaughter at the storming of the stronghold of Ham, and the demise of Humières, created a profound sensation. The restless populace, in the absence of other excitements, clamoured as if the machinations of the sections of Paris had not principally aided in giving over the fairest portions of France to the Spaniard. Popular indignation fell on the duke d'Aumale, who, as governor of Picardy, was declared answerable for, and an accomplice in, the late catastrophe. The Parisians never pardoned Aumale his memorable flight from Senlis.[2] The duke professed abject veneration for Spain and the popedom. His mind was narrow; and he hated with the intensity engendered by a sense of humiliation.

[1] De Thou, liv. 112.

[2] Henry III., His Court and Times, bk. 6.

Aumale resented the successes of Henry IV.; and refused to be propitiated even by the generous clemency of the king, who recently had made overtures to recall him to a sense of duty. The duke preferred waiting in the antechambers of the Flemish viceroy, rather than claim restoration to his rank in France, if submission to Le Béarnois was its inevitable condition. The duke was a harsh husband; and held himself aggrieved by the solicitations of his consort, who implored him to abandon his hostility, and make cordial reconciliation with *cè bon et brave roi*.

The exasperation became so intense against the duke after the capture of Ham, that the attorney-general la Guesle, to appease popular clamour, found himself compelled to present articles of indictment to the Parliament of Paris. The high court forthwith proceeded to try the duke d'Aumale for treason on the following grounds:—That the said duke obstinately persisted in his rebellion, despising the clemency of the king; that he had conspired to deliver Ham to the Spaniards, the which crime had been the cause of the late slaughter, during which M. d'Humières had fallen; and that he had traitorously betrayed his country by league with the Spaniards. Sentence was immediately pronounced. After a preamble, reciting Aumale's misdemeanours and revolts, the act condemned the said duke to die the death of a traitor, by being drawn—in person, if possible, or in effigy—on a hurdle to the place of execution; there to expiate his crimes, by being dismembered by horses. The decree directed his head to be impaled on a spear, and placed over the porte St. Denis; and his limbs to be affixed over three different gates of the city. The duke was declared degraded

from his rank; and his children and their posterity proclaimed aliens and plebeian. All the duke's castles and palaces were ordered to be razed, including the sumptuous edifice of Anet; the trees of the grand avenue of this castle were to be sawn asunder, in token of the ruin which had fallen on the owner. The escutcheon of Aumale, moreover, was to be defaced; and the portraits of the rebel duke destroyed.[1] This rigorous sentence was sanctioned by acclamation. The decree was therefore hastily presented, by command of the high court, for the ratification of the prince de Conty and the executive council. By the advice of MM. de Schomberg and Bellièvre, the prince proposed that the signature of the warrant of attainder should be postponed until the return of his majesty. It was felt that Aumale as yet had not been guilty of treason more malignant than the duke de Mayenne; and the king had latterly shown the duke notable forbearance. Nevertheless, as the trial and condemnation of Aumale proceeded spontaneously from the highest court of the realm, Conty sent for the first president de Harlay, and requested that the chamber would consent to suspend execution of so important a sentence, until his majesty's pleasure could be ascertained. De Harlay, who appreciated the scruples of the council, readily undertook to obtain the desired delay; and even promised to issue a final citation to the duke d'Aumale, to show cause why the sentence of the high court should not be carried into effect.

Affairs were thus in suspense, when news reached Paris of a renewal of hostilities before Dourlens, in

[1] De Thou.—Registres du Parlement de Paris—Coloma—Hist. de las Guerras de los Estados Baxos, lib. 8. Cayet—Nov. Chron. Etoile. Le Grain—Decade de Henri IV.

which Aumale was personally engaged. The loss of Ham, and the slaughter of their countrymen at the attack on that town, infuriated the Spaniards. An intrigue was set afloat by Fuentes to regain possession of the fortress, through the relatives of M. de Gomeron, who was still detained a captive in Brussels. His father, M. d'Orvilliers, still had command in the fortress; and by menaces of decapitating the unfortunate Gomeron,[1] the Spanish council attempted to stir up a sedition in Ham, during which troops were to be introduced into the town. Orvilliers, however, extricated himself from his perplexing position, by promptly resigning his command and quitting Ham. Thus foiled, Fuentes continued his preparations for the conquest of the Cambresis; and as a preliminary captured the fort of Câtelet, and besieged the town of Dourlens, in order the more straitly to invest Cambray. The king's generals, Bouillon, St. Paul, and the admiral Villars, meantime, concerted measures and resolved to attempt the succour of Dourlens. Nevers, who was invested with supreme power as generalissimo, had not yet joined the army of Picardy; his health being in a critical condition. Fuentes, through his spies, learned the intentions of the royal generals, and by the advice of M. de Rône he resolved to march and encounter the foe. Leaving a division before Dourlens to continue the siege, the Spanish army com-

[1] Gomeron was eventually decapitated by order of Fuentes, on the refusal of Sessevel, who replaced M. d'Orvilliers in command at Ham, to surrender the fortress. "Lo cierto es," writes Coloma, the judicious narrator of the wars in Flanders, "que si Gomeron no mereciò la muerte por averse perdido la plaza quando no estava a su cargo, lo mereciò por averla vendida."—Guerras de los Estados Baxos.—Barcelona, 1627.

menced its march on the 24th of July, 1595. The cavalry was commanded by Carracciolo prince d'Avellino: M. de Rône, and two powerful battalions of troops, with four cannons, followed; next, marched Fuentes himself, attended by the duke d'Aumale, and the *élite* of the Spanish *noblesse* in camp. The French force advanced, led by Bouillon, St. Paul, and Villars. It consisted of 700 chosen cavaliers, 600 arquebusiers, and a body of 2000 infantry. Nothing daunted by the superior force opposed, Bouillon gallantly charged the van of the Spanish army. The prince d'Avellino and his column steadily received the shock, and in their turn attacked their assailants. The famed Spanish battalions under Rône then formed, and presented their serried front to the enemy; while, by the direction of Fuentes, the Basque sharpshooters commenced a murderous volley. The French fought with heroic valour, and once the issue of the conflict seemed doubtful. At this crisis the duke d'Aumale, with three battalions of infantry, took Bouillon in the rear, after having compelled the retreat of a division under St. Paul. A fresh troop of arquebusiers under Ribera joined in the conflict, with the body-guard of Fuentes. Opposed by numbers so superior, the duke de Bouillon was compelled to retreat — a design which he accomplished successfully. The admiral de Villars, meanwhile, fought valiantly, moved by hatred for his late allies, the Spaniards; and emulous of the military repute of Bouillon, with whom he was always at variance. The duke, on his retreat, sent a messenger to the admiral informing him of his intention; and exhorting him to extricate his troops, and await fresh reinforcements. Villars rebelled at the command issued by

his rival; and at the ignominy of repulse.[1] He therefore, with his brave band of 200 Norman cavaliers, continued the conflict; but was speedily surrounded and made a prisoner. Whilst the admiral was wrestling sword in hand with his captors, a soldier, by the order of Contreras a Spanish officer, deliberately shot him through the head.[2] The admiral fell; and in a few minutes was so mangled by the sword thrusts of his savage assassins, that his body could not afterwards be identified. This inhuman murder was perpetrated to avenge the defection of M. de Villars from the league, and his surrender of Rouen to Henry IV., which broke the Spanish power in the north of France. Some historians assert that Villars was betrayed into this death-struggle by Bouillon, who was jealous of the admiral's repute, ability, and favour with his royal master. Finding retreat inevitable, Bouillon, it is said, sent the admiral word that a charge on the flank of the enemy might create a favourable diversion. Villars, without reply, raised his arms aloft—his accustomed signal to his brave troopers—then dashing forwards, was soon engaged in the midst of the enemy. Bouillon, thereupon, it is averred, gave the signal for retreat, and thus perfidiously abandoned Villars to his fate. The duke de Sully affirms such

[1] "Villars, incapable de fuir ou de trembler, fit des efforts incroyables, avec un petit nombre de brave gens, qui ne l'abandonnerent point: mais enfin assaillis et envellopés de tout côtés, ils furent tous portés à terre, et expirent percés de coups ou massacrés de sang froid."—Mém. de Sully, liv. 7ème. Mém. de la Ligne, t. 6. Mathieu, t. 2.

[2] "Contreras de embidia de ver tan buena presa en otras manos, mandò a un page suyo que le matasen, y partiese la diferencia: el mozo no fué perezosa porque poniendole la esco-

to be the truth; the assertion, however, is positively contradicted by M. de Thou, by Aubigné, and by more than one person engaged in this skirmish. These historians state that Villars refused to withdraw, on receiving a message to that effect from his colleagues Bouillon and St. Paul; and that the latter consequently sent the marquis de Belin and his troop to support the admiral. Belin was taken prisoner, and more mercifully dealt with than the admiral; while his men were cut to pieces. Much of Rosny's unpopularity arose from a certain dogged iteration of any preconceived opinion, even after refutation both lucid and concise had been offered. The duke de Bouillon, and MM. de Villeroy and de Sancy were the bugbears which disquieted the early career of the future duc de Sully. The discomfited French retreated to their camp; while the conde de Fuentes returned in triumph to Dourlens. The siege of this place was pressed with vigour; so that Cambray might be attacked before the defeated generals had recovered their repulse. On the last day of July, the town was stormed and captured, after a sanguinary fight. The Spaniards rushed into Dourlens, slaying all whom they met, amid hoarse cries of "vengeance for the slain of Ham!" All the French in the place, amounting to 1200 men, were massacred; some being slain amid dreadful torments. The commandant Charles de Hallerom count de Dinant, fell fighting at the assault. Fuentes then established his head-quarters in Dourlens, preparatory to his attack on Cambray. Philip II. vouchsafed to

peta le atravesse en cabeza, y cayò luego muerto."—Guerras de Flande, de los Estados Baxos—Carlos de Coloma, lib. 8, p. 180, et seq.

indite a flattering epistle to his victorious general; who, in truth, excited more alarm on the French frontier than his still more renowned predecessor, Farnese duke of Parma.

On the tidings of this defeat, the duke de Nevers repaired to the camp. The disaster temporarily allayed the feuds of the generals; and glad to be relieved of so onerous a responsibility, Bouillon tendered his *bâton* of command to the duke. "It is too late now, Monseigneur, to profit by my experience. Affairs on this frontier are in so bad a condition that the *prestige* of majesty alone can restore them!" gravely responded the veteran general. Nevers tried ineffectually to lure the Spaniards again into the field. Fuentes, however, was occupied in planning his march upon Cambray with the new viceroy of Flanders, the cardinal-archduke Albert,[1] who, on his nomination to that office, visited Dourlens to confer with the count. Nevers, therefore, reinforced the garrison of Cambray by 400 men, under the command of his youngest son, the duke de Réthelois. The duke was also successful in introducing a convoy of provisions into Cambray; which it was believed would enable the garrison to hold out until after the arrival of the king. Balagny the governor and his wife, however, were hated by the people of Cambray.

[1] Youngest son of the emperor Maximilian II. and of Marie d'Autriche, daughter of the emperor Charles V. Albert received a cardinal's hat in 1577 from Gregory XIII. He had been viceroy of Portugal, and was nominated to the archiepiscopal see of Toledo. On the demise of the archduke Ernest, Philip II. destined the hand of his daughter, the infanta Isabel, for Albert, after his renunciation of the purple. Philip II. always showed extraordinary favour to cardinal Albert, so much so as to excite the jealousy of his son prince Philip.—Herrera.—Hist. Gen.

Madame de Balagny possessed the violent and irascible temper of her deceased brother, M. de Bussy d'Amboise, whose feuds convulsed the court during the early part of the reign of Henry III. The unpopularity of monsieur and madame de Balagny, and the absence of the king, encouraged the Spanish general to attempt the reconquest of the Cambresis; a territory wrested from the sovereignty of Philip II. by the late duke d'Anjou.

The massacre of Dourlens revived the fierce animosity of the people of Paris against the duke d'Aumale. The duke, when he led the reserve which compelled Bouillon to retreat, rode girt with the red scarf of Spain.[1] He also subsequently repaired to Brussels to compliment the imperial viceroy on the victory; and was present at the *Te Deum* chanted in the church of Ste. Gudule, in thanksgiving for so signal a triumph. The ire of the people, therefore, found vent in a clamorous demand for the punishment of so incorrigible a traitor. Jerôme Augenoust thereupon presented a petition to the chambers, praying that the sentence pronounced might be executed on the person and effects of Charles de Lorraine, *ci-devant* duc d'Aumale. The chambers assembled, and voted an address to the prince de Conty and the council of state, which was presented by M. de Harlay, the first president. The council deemed it inexpedient longer to withhold its

[1] "Le duc, en arrivant a l'avant garde de l'infanterie Espagnole qui marchoit vers la Fère quitta publiquement son echarpe noire brodée de larmes d'argent (comme la portoient les princes de la maison de Guise depuis qu'ils avoient pris les armes), et mit une echarpe rouge, qu'il a portée comme servitour de la maison de Bourgogne 27 ans durant."—Coloma—De Thou.

sanction to a decree of the chambers solemnly given, the execution of which had twice been demanded amidst popular acclamation; besides, treason so malignant demanded some act of supreme repression from a government confident in its strength. M. de Rosny was in vain consulted by his former colleagues: his counsels on their first assumption of office had been slighted; and now Rosny left them in this strait to the exercise of their alleged superior sapience. On the 6th of August, nevertheless, the sentence was executed.[1] The effigy of the duke, girt with a red scarf, was drawn on a hurdle from the Palais to the Place de Grêve, and there dismembered. The shield and banner of Aumale were dragged in the mire, and then broken—while the duke's cognizance, and the quarterings of his arms displayed on the shield of the house of Guise and placed over the portal of his hôtel in Paris, were defaced. The splendid domain of Anet was declared reunited to the crown. This vast palace had been constructed by the duke's grandmother, Diane de Poitiers. The chapel and the portal of the castle were deemed marvels of art. The former was surmounted by a cross of wrought iron of exquisite workmanship, which could be seen at a distance of several leagues. The façade of the palace displayed wondrous carvings and tracery of stonework, pierced by arabesques of blue enamel; and by Diane's symbolical crescent, and the ciphers H. D. The glory of Anet, however, departed with Diane de Poitiers, who bequeathed the palace to the duc d'Aumale, the son of her eldest daughter. The financial affairs of the duke were usually involved by the turbulent support which he bestowed on opponents of

[1] Ibid—Dupleix, Aubigné, Etoile.

the government. The beautiful edifice of Anet, therefore, with its enamels, tesselated pavements, stained glass windows designed by the *maestro* Raphael d'Urbino, and gorgeous marbles, was suffered to fall from its pristine splendour. A few months before the surrender of Paris, Madame d'Aumale and her young daughter sought refuge at Anet; and there they were visited by Rosny, who gives a dreary relation of the solitude of their abode. "I went to visit Madame d'Aumale," writes Rosny, "who gave me a gracious reception. She took me by the hand, and led me through galleries, and amid lovely gardens, which render Anet a palace of enchantments. Outwardly I saw nothing unworthy of the owners of an abode truly royal; and I should never have divined the deplorable straits to which the duke was reduced, had not the duchess asked me to sup and sleep under her roof. After a repast badly served, for which we had to wait, I was conducted into a vast apartment shining with marbles, but so empty and cold, that I could neither warm myself, nor sleep in bed. The curtains were short, and made of thin taffeta; my counterpane was slight, and my sheets damp. Shivering with cold, I therefore rose, and thought to console myself by making a large fire; but I found only green wood—branches of juniper and holly—so that I could not kindle a fire. I therefore remained awake all night, and never laid aside my robe de chambre.[1]"

The king had now a recipient for such princely confiscations; and soon "his little César," at the suit of Gabrielle d'Estrées, became lord of the gorgeous abode and domain of Diane de Poitiers. The duchesse d'Aumale was permitted by Henry to lead a cheerless

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 6ème.

36983

existence at court until the marriage of her only child, Catherine Anne de Lorraine,[1] with the duke de Nemours; when Madame d'Aumale rejoined her outlawed husband at Brussels, where the duke subsisted on a pension grudgingly doled forth from the Spanish treasury.

The parliament of Paris having visited the crime of the duke d'Aumale with signal retribution, permitted a motion to be brought before the chambers as a wholesome warning, relative to the expediency of instituting an inquiry respecting the past proceedings of various high personages. The question was proposed and negatived without discussion; nevertheless, the attitude of the chambers, and the exasperation of the populace against the friends and late allies of Aumale, so terrified the duchesse de Montpensier, that she fled from Paris to the village of St. Germain. Rumours more alarming soon disturbed her retirement, of the alleged resolution taken by the parliament and council of state, to present articles of impeachment against the chiefs of the late rebellion; which step was to be followed by the arrest of those arraigned. Madame de Montpensier thereupon sought audience of Madame, who was residing at the castle of St. Germain, and implored the protection of that princess; with permission to occupy a chamber within the precincts of the palace. Madame, though stern in temper, was mag-

[1] Mademoiselle d'Aumale possessed the highest reputation for decorum of conduct; and her name is inscribed on the lists of the saintly women of France. By her marriage with the duke de Nemours, she had three sons. The duchess de Nemours died in 1618.—Hist. Catholique des Hommes et des Femmes illustres par leur pieté dans les 16ème et 17ème siècles, par le P. Hilarion de Coste—Paris, en fol. 1625.

nanimous. She gave the duchess assurances of her protection; and, if necessary, promised to intercede in her behalf with his majesty. In the abundance of her gratitude madame de Montpensier presented to Madame several pieces of embroidery and fine needlework, wrought by Queen Anne de Bretagne; and bequeathed by Renée, duchesse de Ferrara, to her grand-daughter the duchess.[1]

The duke de Mayenne, meanwhile, having recovered from his panic after the conflict of Fontaine, began eagerly to negotiate with the council, through the president, Jeannin, and M. de Villeroy. The victories of the king, and the fate of d'Aumale, warned the duke that the period during which it was possible for him to dictate peace on equal terms was past. Nevertheless, M. de Mayenne demanded payment of his debts; amnesty for his partisans; a province as an indemnity, with the nomination therein to all military and ecclesiastical offices! In vain Villeroy privately counselled the duke to withdraw such pretensions; and humbly propitiate Madame de Monceaux to plead in his behalf. Mayenne persisted in forwarding his memorial; and during its discussion by the council he held himself haughtily aloof in Châlons, the refuge granted by the king. Henry, when informed of these preposterous demands, was pursuing his victorious career at the head of his army of Burgundy. Not a single hostile detachment remained within the French frontier. Velasco, intrenched at Gray,[2] beheld the army of the king menace his retreat; while a succession of brilliant skirmishes on the borders of Franche-Comté at-

[1] Cayet—Chron. Nov.

[2] "Velasco era trincerato à Gray, e fortificato in modo, che el rey più voltò tento in vano de disferlò." . . .

tested that the military *prestige* of Le Béarnnois had suffered no eclipse.

The king dates his reply to the notification of the agents sent to treat for the duke de Mayenne, from his camp at Pesmes. "Messieurs," wrote his majesty, "in reply to the memorial which you have sent me, I deem its contents so unreasonable and surprising, that it has wounded the ears and hearts of all who were present at its perusal.[1] You know the instructions which I gave you. I will add nothing thereto. If I have before refused such demands, thanks be to God no reverse has compelled me to rescind such determination! If M. de Mayenne persists in unreasonable demands, break off the negotiation. I have demonstrated before God and the world, that I have done more than I ought to lead back the said duke de Mayenne to his duty. Such requests, as I have remarked to the prevost Oudineau, render me suspicious of the intentions of the said duke de Mayenne; who, I must believe, desires to remain chief of a faction, in order that he may agitate again on the first convenient opportunity. Such proceedings I am resolved no longer to tolerate in my kingdom; the which, by the help of God, I shall find more easy to suppress, than I did to conquer back that which rebellion essayed to wrest. Now that all deceits are unmasked, future wars must be state conflicts; and every man a Frenchman, or a Spaniard." The decision of the king was communicated to M. de Mayenne. In vain the duke looked for aid to his friends and allies. The former, includ-

[1] "Qu'il a fait mal aux oreilles, et aux cœurs de ceux qui en ont ouy la lecture."—Archives générales du Departement du Nord, edited by M. Beger de Xivrey.—Lettres Missives de Henri IV. t. 4.

ing the duke de Lorraine, Villeroy, and Jeannin, counselled submission; the latter tantalized by perfidious suggestions. The final overthrow of the duke's visions occurred when news reached him of the cordial, and even eager reception given by Clement VIII. to Henry's envoy, Du Perron, bishop elect of Evreux. Mayenne then resolved, through his sister, Madame de Montpensier, to sound the dispositions of Gabrielle d'Estrées. It was known that the most cherished reverie of Gabrielle d'Estrées was her future legal union with the king; and the consequent recognition of her young son, César Monsieur, as dauphin of France. The agents of Mayenne, therefore, insinuated that Gabrielle could not accomplish a deed more acceptable to his holiness—to whom the matter of the royal divorce from Marguerite de Valois must be referred—than by mediating between his majesty and M. de Mayenne. The duke, moreover, pledged himself to offer no opposition to the elevation of Gabrielle as queen-consort; and promised to support the claims of her son, if called by the testamentary injunctions of the king to ascend the throne, in preference to the rightful pretensions of Condé, who was then his majesty's heir-presumptive.[1] Madame de Monceaux, therefore, promised her mediation. On her arrival at Lyons, Gabrielle candidly confessed to the king the inducements which had been tendered to secure her patronage. Henry, far from indignantly crushing the germs of future troubles which this compact contained, neither noticed nor alluded to the proposal; so great was his affectionate zeal for the interests of his little César. The result of the intervention of Madame de Monceaux, however, was

[1] De Thou. Fornier's Hist. de la Maison de Guise.

publicly evidenced by the signature of a truce for three months by his majesty; during which period the terms of Mayenne's submission might be finally discussed and ratified. A similar interval was granted to the duke de Mercœur, at the intercession of the Marquis d'Elbœuf; a boon, which when vouchsafed to Mayenne could not equitably be denied to M. de Mercœur.

The siege of Cambray was diligently prosecuted by Fuentes during these incidents. A large section of the inhabitants remained neutral, some wishing prosperity to the arms of their late suzerain, his catholic majesty; others clinging to the French protectorate, provided that M. de Balagny was deposed and exiled. The archbishop of Cambray, whose revenues had been arbitrarily sequestered by Balagny, ardently advocated for the Spanish claim. "This Balagny, what is he to us?" asked the archbishop. "True, he is the illegitimate scion of a noble house, renowned for learning and eloquence;[1] but placed by the late queen Catherine in command of this garrison, on the demise of her said majesty, this man usurped the sovereignty, and therefore equally betrays both French and Spanish interests! Let us petition his majesty to depose his rebellious subject, our tyrant; and let this be the test of his Christian majesty's goodwill towards Cambray!" A deputation, therefore, of the inhabitants of Cambray and its district, repaired to seek audience of king Henry. The king, on their arrival at Dijon, had quitted that city for Lyons, whither the envoys followed. Balagny, meantime, sensible of the odium which his conduct had incurred, wrote explanations to Madame de

[1] Balagny was the illegitimate son of the famous Jean de Belley, bishop of Valence.

Monceaux; and requested her interposition with the king Henry, so that the prayer of the people might not be granted. In case his majesty condescended to his petition, Balagny proposed to hold Cambray and the Cambresis as a fief under Monsieur! The project proved acceptable, both to the king and his mistress. Henry therefore dismissed the envoys, lauding the firm resistance which the inhabitants of Cambray had displayed in repelling the assaults of the Spaniards. As for M. de Balagny, the king declared "that his removal was impossible, as it would contravene former treaties: nevertheless, his majesty announced his resolve to visit the Flemish frontier; when he would mediate between the people of Cambray and their governor." The royal response kindled feelings of despair, and precipitated the surrender of the town; the people preferred the yoke of their ancient rulers to the tyranny of Balagny. Madame de Balagny, nevertheless, showed heroic courage; on several occasions she led the soldiers to the attack, and fought in the midst. She mounted guard, pointed the artillery, and frequently passed the night in riding from post to post. The mere anticipation of being deposed from her assumed dignity infuriated madame de Balagny. "I prefer to die a sovereign princess, rather than to drag on a miserable existence, subject to any power!"[1] was her arrogant response when remonstrated with on the peril and enormous fatigue of her daily life. Her courage, however, could not arrest the victorious advance of Fuentes; or conciliate the people, alienated by past misrule and oppression. On the 5th day of October, Cambray capitulated and voluntarily opened its gates to the conde de Fuentes.

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps.

The articles of surrender stipulated that the Cambray and the Cambresis should return under the suzerainty of Spain, and be subject, as heretofore, to the government of its archbishop.[1] The duke de Réthelois and his brave officers defended the citadel until the 9th of the month; when, by direction of the duke de Nevers, they capitulated. The French, after being entertained by Fuentes at a superb banquet, were honourably escorted to Peronne.

Madame de Balagny, meanwhile, on the surrender of the citadel, abandoned herself to despairing grief. Her fury was so great, that after a violent conflict of words with her husband, to whom she proposed suicide, she fell back in a fit, from which she never revived.[2] The death of this woman inspired no regrets. The marshal de Balagny, her husband, speedily consoled himself, by making suit for the hand of madame Diane d'Estrées,[3] sister of the powerful favourite.

[1] Relationi del Cardinale Bentivoglio, lib. 2, cap. 10.

[2] "Madama de Baligny acabo sus dias pocas horas antes que le fuesse necessario dexan de ser Princesa. El Conde (de Fuentes) embiò a visitar a Madama de Baligny los mejores medicos de exercito, y grandes regalas de conservias, que se tiene por cierto no provò, ni otra cosa que fuesse sustento desde que se rindio la ciudad—tal era la fuerza de anima de aquella muger gentil.—Coloma Guerras de los Estados Baxos, lib. 8, p. 199, et seq.

[3] Diane d'Estrées was one of the most abandoned of the daughters of Antoine d'Estrées. The Marquis de Cœuvres often bewailed his alliance with "the corrupt race of La Bourdaisière," and expressed himself, relative to his wife and daughters, in language too emphatic for transcription.

CHAPTER III.

1595—1596.

King Henry makes his entry into Lyons—Position of affairs in Rome—Clement VIII. and the cardinal d'Ossat—Du Perron, bishop elect of Evreux, is nominated to proceed to Rome and act in conjunction with d'Ossat—Cardinal Aldobrandini—Negotiations for the reconciliation of Henri Quatre with the Holy See—Details—Ceremonies of the Absolution of Henri IV.—Reception of the news in France—The war in Provence—Designs of the duke d'Epernon—Henry returns to Paris—Address of the Parliament—The count de Soissons and Madame—Broils between Henry and his sister—Henry takes the command of the army of Picardy—Position of affairs—Siege of la Fère—The camp of Travercy—Correspondence of Henry IV. with the Pope—Arrival of Condé at St. Germain—His household—Correspondence of the king with M. de Soissons—Sojourn of Henri IV. at Folembray—His treaty with the duke de Mayenne—Details—Siege of la Fère—Appointment of Albert archduke and cardinal to the viceroyalty of the Low Countries—Views of the Spanish court—Philip II. procures the release of the Cardinal Albert from his priestly vows, and betroths him to Doña Isabel—Entry of the Archduke into Brussels—Invasion of France by the Spaniards—They capture Calais—Embassy of Sancy to England—Propositions of Queen Elizabeth—Correspondence with the king—

Negotiations for the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive between the crowns of England and France.

KING HENRY quitted Dijon and made his public entry into Lyons on Sunday, September 4th. The city, so long the prey of faction, and tyrannized over since the days of Charles IX., by a succession of rapacious governors, hailed the presence of Henri Quatre with plaudits. The pageant which the loyal citizens prepared for their king was the most gorgeous offered to his majesty since his accession. Early on the day fixed for the ceremonial Henry repaired by boat to La Clare, at which the opening ceremonies were to be performed. His majesty had scarcely landed when a procession of the chapter of the cathedral church of St. Jean de Lyons arrived. Surrounded by his principal nobles Henry took his seat on a throne placed upon an elevated platform, from whence two flights of steps descended to the floor of the hall. The canons, thirty-two in number, presented a humble address to the king; and prayed him to maintain their ecclesiastical privileges. "Not only will I maintain them, but I will augment them!" responded the king frankly. The Swiss and German garrisons, led by the marshal d'Ornano and by M. de Belliévre, next approached. The men surrounded the platform; while their leaders ascended to the throne, and kneeling, humbly congratulated his majesty on his auspicious arrival. Next came a procession of the ecclesiastics of Lyons—monks, priests, and the heads of the various colleges—excepting the dignitaries of the cathedral. The archdeacon of St. Just read the harangue, to which the king made satisfactory response: "Of the three orders in my realm, your order, reverend fathers, has been the last to acknowledge my rightful claims; therefore, I doubt

not that you will now especially strive to prove yourselves my most loyal and affectionate subjects!" Henry, having administered this slight rebuke, rose from his throne, and reverently kissed the crucifix, which was upborne by an ecclesiastic. Next followed the members of the legal courts of the Lyonnais both civil and criminal, the municipality, the town sergeant and councillors. The harangue, which was short and pithy, was spoken by the president de Lange. The king replied, "Messieurs, on my accession I found my kingdom disturbed and rebellious. I have not, therefore, been able to witness the prosperity which I should have desired. Nevertheless, by the help of God, I shall finish what I have thus far so happily accomplished. It is my ambition to recall the golden age; and I pray that together we may partake of such felicitous period; I, as your king—you, as my faithful and well-beloved subjects." Then came a procession of the children of the principal citizens of Lyons, who offered the king "their youth and their future prowess." Henry gave them gracious response, and rose to witness the defiling of the city trained bands to the number of 5,000 men, which were to precede the royal cavalcade on its entry into the city of Lyons. This procession was superb and well ordered. Each band was led by its captain, and displayed its appropriate colours. As the men passed the royal platform vehement were the cheers given for the king. Next to the city bands came the most notable citizens of Lyons. M. de Raquelaure, at the head of 100 gentlemen of the chamber, followed. A detachment of Scotch and Swiss guards immediately preceded M. de Liancour Beaumont, who carried the royal sword in the room of the

duke de Bellegarde, who was celebrating his nuptial festivities. Four pages followed, each bearing a golden spur; then came the constable duke de Montmorency, riding bareheaded, bearing aloft the sword of state. Henry at this stage of the procession descended from the platform, and mounting his horse, took place in the cavalcade. The habit of the king was composed of cloth of silver, embroidered with pearls and skyblue silk—the colour of Gabrielle d'Estrées. The housings of his horse were magnificently fringed and embossed. His majesty was attended by the dukes de Guise and de Montpensier, the marshal de Brissac, M. de Villeroy, and a great suite of nobles. The keys of the city were presented to Henry at the gate by four municipal officers, amid salvoes of artillery. The streets were adorned with triumphal arches and obelisks, surmounted by the royal legends, and mottoes of welcome. Trophies commemorating the victories of the king, on which Henry first beheld the epithet "Le Grand" appended to his name, greeted his majesty. The people cheered and scattered flowers and green branches along the royal route. At the entrance of the cathedral precincts a procession of clergy received the king, and escorted Henry, bearing over his head a canopy of white damask, to the portals of the cathedral; where the archbishop Espinac, waited *in pontificalibus*, attended by the suffragan bishops of the see. Espinac had been well practised in the arts of the orator; his address, therefore, was fluent and eloquent. "Our forefathers gave their lives for the crown; our surviving relatives, sire, intend to follow the same noble example: we, the clergy of your archiepiscopal see of Lyons, humbly accept the same vocation," said

Espinac. "May God Almighty subdue your enemies, restore concord to Holy Church, and peace to your realm; and finally, after a long and prosperous life, crown you with immortality!" Henry made reply:—"I have won battles, I have tasted of victory; but not unto myself does the glory appertain. I arrogate nothing: to God be glory and praise! Pray for blessings on my efforts; and be assured that I will maintain and reverence our holy faith!" His majesty was then conducted into the cathedral. The archbishop presently demanded whether his majesty, like all his illustrious predecessors, would permit himself to be nominated first honorary canon of the cathedral chapter of St. Jean[1] of Lyons? Henry having responded in the affirmative, Espinac put a cambric surplice over the royal shoulders, and led his majesty to his stall. The clergy present next intoned *Te Deum Laudamus;* after which the king retired to the fort of Pierre Encize, which was then the royal abode in Lyons.[2]

In Rome, meanwhile, the successes of the king, and the absolute power which he wielded over the realm of France, occasioned intense consternation; and many regrets for the harsh discourtesy exhibited towards the duke de Nevers and his colleagues. The pope and his nephew and minister, cardinal Aldobrandini, had trusted in the invincible preponderance of Spanish arms throughout Europe.

[1] The chapter of the cathedral of St. Jean de Lyons was composed of a dean, archdeacon, precentor, vicar-choral, a warden, a sacristan, grand provost, and 23 canons. They bore the title of Comtes de St. Jean; and before nomination were compelled to show proof of four degrees of *noblesse*, paternal and maternal. The revenue of the chapter was 40,000 crowns.

[2] Godefroy, Grand Cerem—Entrée du Roy Henri IV. en la ville de Lyons, t. 1. Cayet, Chron. Nov.

When the Spaniards had been chased over the frontier, the factions quelled, and their late chieftains pardoned by Henry's magnanimity—while the Gallican church exhibited no signs of languor from its severance from Rome—Clement thought it time to offer overtures. Scarcely, therefore, had Paris fallen, than the pope began to manœuvre, in the hope of luring back an envoy. Henry, however, deeply resented the hostile manner in which the mission of Nevers was received; and had ordered that no representative of France should again appear in Rome, unless at the express and public request of his holiness; and with the understanding that the prayer of such envoy should be granted. Since the mission of M. de Nevers, therefore, France had had no recognized representative at Rome; for d'Ossat held at the papal court the comparatively humble office of agent for the dowager queen Louise. D'Ossat, however, had been the depository of the complaints and misgivings of his holiness, relative to his "erring son." The agents of the pope were the cardinal Toleto, a prelate conspicuous for his charity; and Cæsar Baronius,[1] confessor to his holiness, a learned churchman, who eventually attained to the purple. Whenever d'Ossat visited the pope or his minister, under pretext of soliciting that masses might be celebrated within the precincts of the holy city for the soul of Henry III.,

[1] Cesar Baronius was the son of Camillus Baronio, and of Portia Febonia. He was born at Sora, October 30, 1538. He was created general of the Oratorians in 1593; cardinal in 1596. Baronius was confessor to Pope Clement VIII. and prothonotary of the apostolic see. This illustrious prelate was the author of "Annales Ecclesiastiques." The first volume of this work appeared in 1593: the twelve volumes are each dedicated to a contemporary sovereign. Volume ix. is dedicated to Henri Quatre. Cardinal Baronius died in 1607.

the condition of France and the deportment of the king, were topics invariably introduced. At length pope Clement so far suffered his temporal policy to subdue his resentment at the spiritual obstinacy of Henri Quatre, that he informed d'Ossat, "If the king would accredit another agent, his majesty should have reason to be satisfied with his forbearance and paternal favour." This concession was no sooner intimated to d'Ossat, than he despatched a missive to notify the fact to M. de Villeroy. The tardy decision was gladly accepted by Henry and by his council. While the king remained under the ban of Rome, his rebels continued to defy his authority; and under the specious pretext of zeal for the faith, they promoted the interests of Spain. As the pope and his cardinals, however, had treated with such contumely the illustrious ambassage before despatched, it was resolved to send one envoy only, to act in concert with d'Ossat. After some discussion, du Perron bishop elect of Evreux, was nominated as his majesty's representative and substitute in any ceremonial necessary for the royal shrift. Du Perron was one of the bishops attached to the mission of Nevers, who were immured during the residence of the ambassador at Rome in the palace of the latter; and rescued only from the chambers of the inquisition by the courage and firmness of the duke. The appointment of the bishop of Evreux, therefore, was a nomination which the extreme anxiety of the supreme pontiff lest the Gallican church should adopt a system of self-government, could alone have induced the holy see to tolerate. Du Perron, moreover, had a renown for conviviality rather than for piety; his flippant muse, his intimacy with

madame de Monceaux and her sisters, and his religious levity, scarcely qualified the bishop to represent so illustrious a penitent in the supreme act of the reconciliation of the latter with the church. This mission, however, was not popular; and the selection of an ambassador, as the council experienced, was a difficult task. The rigour of Rome, and the bitterness with which pope Clement denounced all prelates accessory to the abjuration of the king at St. Denis, rendered most of the bishops reluctant to incur the dangers and objurgation of personal conference with his holiness. The great nobles shrank from the mission, indignant at the insolent treatment experienced by the duke de Nevers. Du Perron, therefore, was appointed: it was felt that the sprightly and learned retorts of the bishop, aided by the sagacity and personal *prestige* of d'Ossat, might perhaps bring affairs to a happy termination, rather than the intervention of a more solemn ambassage. The wishes of Gabrielle d'Estrées, moreover, had influence in the appointment of an envoy, whose instructions directed him to enter into no discussion relative to madame la Marquise; but rather to quit Rome if it were attempted to make the exile from court of the latter a condition of papal *bienveillance*.

The approaching arrival of the bishop of Evreux created much excitement in Rome. "I waited upon his eminence Monsignor Aldobrandini,"[1] writes

[1] Pietro Aldobrandini, nephew of Clement, cardinal in 1593. Clement VIII. carried nepotism to a scandalous extent. His favourite nephews were cardinals Pietro Aldobrandini and cardinal Cinthio di Sinigaglia, his sister's son. Another nephew he made general of the church, Giovanni Francesco Aldobrandini, whom he married to his niece Doña Olympia, sister of cardinal Pietro. Margarita Aldobrandini, daughter of Doña

d'Ossat, to M. de Villeroy, "to announce the departure of M. du Perron, who is journeying to Rome through Lorraine and Switzerland. The said lord cardinal showed much delight at the news; his countenance brightened with pleasure, and his language became even more courteous and flowing than usual." The papal minister, imitating the example of the emperor Charles V., always assumed at his audiences an amiable and condescending deportment; and dismissed all personages from his presence perfectly satisfied and flattered. The under-secretaries afterwards transmitted with unsparing vigour of diction, those behests and responses, the utterance of which might have ruffled the placid aspect of his eminence; and have injured his repute for gracious benevolence. Du Perron entered Rome on the 12th of July. In the coach with the prelate sat his colleague, d'Ossat, and MM. de Châtillon and d'Elbène, secretaries of embassy; and the secretary and almoner of the cardinal de Gondy. The ambassadors proceeded to salute his holiness; who gave them welcome, and detained them in conference for upwards of an hour. Du Perron and d'Ossat, on quitting the Quirinal, paid a visit to cardinal Aldobrandini, to whom they related all that had passed in their interview with the pope.[1] On Monday, July 16th, the am-

Olympia, the pope married to the duke of Parma, Ranuzzio I. In 1595 Clement bought the marquisate of Meldola, which he conferred on another nephew, Octavio; and one of the last acts of this pope was to confer a cardinal's hat on the young Sylvestro Aldobrandini, brother of the duchess of Parma.—See Gualdi, Bentevoglio, Litta, Muratori.

[1] "Je n'ai jamais trouvé le pape, ni le cardinal Aldobrandini en deux paroles depuis que je traite avec eux: ni que ce qu'ils m'ont assuré pour vrai ait été autrement. A la verité ils sont bien l'un et l'autre assez prudents pour ne pas dire tout ce

bassadors were publicly received; when they presented a memorial to his holiness, stating their errand, the desires of king Henry, and recapitulating the ambassages already despatched to implore the benediction of the representative of St. Peter. Du Perron then made a brief address: he alluded to the missions of the duke de Luxembourg, the cardinal de Gondy, the marquis de Pisani, and the duke de Nevers, in language and a tone calculated to impress his hearers with a wholesome dread lest the king's patience was exhausted. "His majesty has commissioned us again, most holy father, to throw ourselves at the feet of your Beatitude, and humbly implore you, by the mercies of the Lord Jesus, to give him absolution, in order that his majesty's spirit may repose confidently on the mercy of the Most High, and that the realm of France may have peace. His majesty promises submission to the laws which govern the Holy See. During seven years the king has refrained from inducting to vacant sees, abbeys, and cures—a license enjoyed by his orthodox predecessors when the Pragmatic Sanction was the ecclesiastical code of the realm. The war, holy father, is gradually absorbing the wealth of the church; discipline is despised; and schism abounds—woes which can only be healed by pontifical absolution."[1] Clement, surrounded by his cardinals, accepted the memorial, and curtly replied, "that he would deliberate, and inform the ambassadors of his resolve." The public audience over, du Perron and d'Ossat conferred with the pope, in the presence of cardinal

qu'ils pensent.—Lettre du comte de Béthune a Henri IV., 13 Janvier, 1604.—Bibl. Imp. MS.

[1] De Thou, liv. 113 — Requête de sa majesté.—Lettres d'Ossat, année 1595.

Aldobrandini, with whom Clement was so infatuated as often to term this favoured nephew "*idolo del suo cuore!*"[1] In a subsequent audience the royal envoys delivered to the pope a holograph letter from Henri Quatre, in which his majesty assures Clement of his sincerity—entreats his benediction, and protests his ardour for the Holy See. The pope exhibited great emotion while he perused the missive; he afterwards gave the ambassadors permission to visit the cardinals, and notify the errand upon which they came; "as," said his holiness, "the affairs of France shall be publicly debated, and no longer be retarded and confused by private feuds and partialities."[2] Clement then convoked a consistory in the Quirinal, that the petition of king Henry might be submitted to the highest council of the church. Bitter opposition was evinced by the Spanish ambassador the duque de Sessa,[3] and by the cardinals, adherents of Spain. The duke publicly affirmed, "that Henri le Béarnnois was impenitent, his pretended conversion being a piece of statecraft, and his protestations crocodile's tears—therefore, to absolve so heinous a sinner would bring odium and disgrace on the tiara." The cardinals d'Arragona and Ottavio Parravicino, resorted to every artifice to render the mission of the envoys abortive. The able diplomacy of d'Ossat, and the

[1] Gualdi—Nepotismo di Roma.

[2] Lettres du cardinal d'Ossat—Lettre 28, et seq. "Toute Rome par exprès commandement du pape est en devotion, faisant tous les jours des processions et continuelles prières a Dieu, qu'il lui plaira inspirer S. S. de faire ce qui sera de meilleur en cette affaire si importante pour la religion catholique."

[3] Don Antonio de Cordova y Cardona; he succeeded the Conde de Olivares as Spanish ambassador in Rome.

perplexity of the pope, however, neutralized the formidable opposition of Philip II.[1] On the 2nd of August the consistory met; all the cardinals present in Rome assembled, excepting Arragona and Parravicino, who feigned sickness to absent themselves. Clement made an allocution to the assembled fathers. He enumerated his own pontifical decrees on this affair, "the most important in Christendom." "Seeing," observed his holiness, "that such wholesome severity is ineffectual, and that the triumphs of the king have reduced the realm of France, I intimated my desire that the king should accredit another envoy, whom I promised to receive favourably. I exhort you all to divest yourselves of partialities, and not to regard human intervention, however potent. I conjure you to heed alone the glory of God, and the welfare and aggrandizement of Holy Church; and to reflect soberly, and with much prayer, on the weighty matter submitted to you—remembering that you have not to decide upon the case of a private personage; but you have laid before you the suit of a great prince, strong in armies, and supported by devoted subjects. My brethren, your verdict will decide the fate of the realm of France rather than the private case of the king, who has submitted to the Church. I have therefore determined to admit each of you reverend fathers to

[1] Clement despatched his nephew Giovanni Francesco to Madrid to dispose Philip II. to consent to the shrift of the king. The pope stated that such act was necessary to the welfare of the church and the peace of Christendom; though he had not condescended to the request of king Henry without sending a special envoy to notify such event to the catholic king. Philip replied that "his astonishment was extreme at the weakness and credulity manifested by the holy father."—Herrera—Hist. lib. 9, 10.

private conference, that through your zeal, counsel, and the prayers of All Saints, we may arrive at a holy and righteous decision!"[1] The pontifical address, so moderate in its tone, produced a great effect. Many of the cardinals simultaneously rose to express approval. They beheld the great realm of France gliding from their grasp, with its rich benefices and legations. Instinctively they felt that this was the last appeal of the Gallican church; and that the prelates who had dared to pronounce their king absolved from censures on his abjuration, would congregate, and organize a national council for the administration of the temporal affairs of the Church, if driven to extremity. The careless and even jocund demeanour of his majesty's envoy, du Perron, was regarded as a sign of the indifference which now prevailed in France, as to the concession of the shrift, once so ardently implored. Numbers of prelates nominated, but not yet formally instituted in their dioceses, owing to the ban of Rome, watched the progress of the negotiation; and would, it was foreseen, unite in upholding the authority of a national synod. Du Perron himself was deprived of the emoluments of his see of Evreux; while the archbishop of Bourges had in vain solicited papal letters for his installation over the metropolitan see of Sens.

On the 7th of August the pope began to receive the cardinals separately in conference; these interviews lasted until the twenty-third day of the month, so many were the misgivings, and formidable the opposition of the Spanish faction. The cardinals de Toleto, Aldobrandini, Aquaviva, de Medici, Moro-

[1] Cayet—Chron. Nov. Discorso libero intorno la potenza temporale del Papa. De Thou.

sini, and Montalto, pleaded for the reconciliation of the Holy See with France; as did the Fathers Baronius, Seraphino,[1] and Lomellino—ecclesiastics, who eventually were all admitted to the cardinalate. The cardinal de Joyeuse earnestly prayed the pope to grant speedy absolution to the king, if only to save the house of Joyeuse from ruin; as the duke his brother, the ex-capuchin, would thereupon, it was believed, sever his alliance with the duke d'Epernon, in Provence, and return to his duty. The ambassadors of Venice and Tuscany united in imploring his holiness to condescend to a pontifical act so greatly desired by the Catholic nations of Christendom. Clement nevertheless feigned indecision and uneasiness of conscience. "Our holy father has commanded public prayers in all the churches of Rome, that right inspirations may be vouchsafed him," writes M. d'Ossat to Villeroy. "On Saturday the 5th, the feast of Ste. Marie des Neiges, the pope, attended by a few persons, set out at dawn, barefoot, from his palace on Monte Cavallo, and walked to the church of Ste. Maria Maggiore. There his holiness prayed long, and returned, having still bare feet, to his palace weeping, his eyes fixed on the ground, and neither giving benediction nor salutation to any person. On the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, his holiness made the same pilgrimage; and then celebrated mass with many affecting de-

[1] The pope one day asked Seraphino the news of Rome. "Très saint père," replied Seraphino, "on dit que Clement VII. a perdu l'Angleterre pour s'être trop hâté d'excommunier Henri VIII.: et que Clement VIII. perdra la France, pour avoir trop diferé d'absoudre Henri IV." This Seraphino was the illegitimate son of the chancellor Olivier by a lady of Bologna, distantly related to the pope's family of Aldobrandino.

monstrations of devotion and affection for the king."[1]

Whilst his holiness was suffering such tribulation of conscience, M. de Villeroy, to whom d'Ossat's recital is addressed, and Henry himself, were absorbed by very mundane avocations. Villeroy, with his accustomed ingenuity, was endeavouring to break his relations with the council of state; which, as it had quarrelled with Rosny, and through M. de Sancy had angered the favourite, was certain ere long to be at issue with his majesty. The king, on receiving details of the disaster on the Flemish frontier, quitted Lyons, and had repaired straight to Muret, to solace himself by the society of Rosny; and to obtain from the shrewd recitals of the latter adequate information on the causes of the discord which had impeded the acts of the council. The able Villeroy congratulated himself therefore on his foresight —instead of approaching his majesty like his collegues, laden with futile grievances and protests, he set out for Muret, taking with him the draught of a plan, pecuniary and military, for a campaign on the frontier, to avenge the loss of Cambray and the massacre of Dourlens. "When the news reached us that the pope was likely at length to relent, the intelligence seemed as nothing!" writes Sully.

His holiness having partially reconciled his conscience to a measure demanded by sound policy—the reconciliation of the Holy See with France—next imparted the conditions upon which the interdict might be removed. The concessions demanded were seven, to whit:—that the absolution given to his

[1] Lettre 80.—d'Ossat. De Thou, liv. 113. Cayet—Chron. Nov. Davila. Herrera—Hist. lib. 9, et seq. Sully—Mém. le Grain. Perefixe. Journal de Henri IV., année 1596.

majesty by the French bishops should be acknowledged by the king as null and illegal; that within one year his majesty shall engage to rescue his heir presumptive the young prince de Condé, from his Huguenot guardians, and cause him to be instructed in the true faith; that the canons of Trent shall be accepted and proclaimed; that no heretic shall be nominated to public offices; that the mass shall be re-established in Béarn; that all ecclesiastical lands alienated, confiscated, or sold during the troubles, shall be restored to the Church; that his majesty shall build and endow a monastery or a convent in every province of his realm; finally, that the king shall swear to observe the concordats concluded with the Holy See by his predecessors. The pope wished to add an article stipulating for the repeal of the decree of banishment against the Jesuits; but Clement, by the advice of the cardinals Aldobrandini and Toleto, desisted from making a proposal insulting to the Gallican parliaments. Much contention and wrangling occurred between the royal and papal agents before these articles, both in word and substance, could be rendered acceptable to both parties.

The good offices of cardinal Toleto, however, were successfully exerted. "I can truly affirm," writes d'Ossat, "that after God, who gave prosperity to the king's arms, and who inspired his holiness with the resolution to absolve his majesty, the said cardinal has done more than man to strengthen and aid the papal resolves. His holiness confides in the said cardinal, and esteems him for his doctrine, prudence, integrity, fidelity, and attachment."[1] His holiness next communicated privately to the royal deputies five further conditions, which regarded the personal penance to

[1] Lettre 30.

be inflicted on his majesty for his contumacious perseverance in heresy. Henry was required to bind himself to hear high mass on Sundays and festivals; and to be present at a daily mass, as "was the custom of the kings his predecessors." He was to take the Holy Virgin for his especial patroness; and to recite the litanies every Wednesday, and the litany of Notre Dame every Saturday. Lastly, the king was to receive the Holy Eucharist in public, four times in the year.[1] These stipulations having been accepted and ratified by the royal envoys, Clement summoned his cardinals to council on the 30th of August, to communicate the articles decided upon. This intimation was made by his holiness abruptly, and in a tone which indicated that the consistory had been assembled to listen, and not to debate. The pope stated that two-thirds of the members of the sacred college had privately counselled him to absolve the king; a decision which he deemed not only expedient but requisite.[2] One of the prelates, the

[1] Ibid.—Du Perron is accused of having succumbed under the bribe of a cardinal's hat to consent, on his master's behalf, to many conditions unworthy of royal majesty—"Un certo cortesano disse a du Perron che'l re n'avrebbe proso grandissimo sdegno, per cagion d'esserse abbassato troppo nel giorno delle cerimonie, impretrando la benedizione."—Discorso Libero, cap. 3.

[2] "Il papa fece tanto per la sua prudenza, che tutti li cardinali furon disposti à quella reconciliazione, facendo esso souvenirgli delle parole, le quale pronunciò Nestore, veggendo la disunion perticolare che nell' assedio di Troia sopraguinse tra Agamemnone ed Achille. 'O diceva egli, che gusto avranno li Troiani nostri nemici quando intenderanno la divisione che si vede tra li due prencipe, i più valerosi di tutta laGrecia!' Allo stesso modo, disse lo Papa, quanta contentezza di cuore avranno gl' Eretici sappiendo la discordia che e tra'l padre, e lo primogenito della Chiesa?"—Discorso libero intorno la potenza temporale del Papa.

cardinal Colonna, adverse to the concession, rose to reply; but the pope rang his silver bell, in token that the audience was terminated, and, rising from his throne, passed into his private apartments. "It is no use disputing longer on this question; all doubts are resolved, and the reconciliation of France with this see is decided upon!" said his holiness to the cardinals Aldobrandini and Arragona, as he quitted the hall of conference. After this public announcement of the papal intents, MM. du Perron and d'Ossat were visited in succession by all the cardinals, and by the chief Roman nobility. The pope's relatives of Aldobrandini, who monopolized the honours and public offices of the papal city, were assiduous in their congratulations. The recantation of Madame was several times mentioned by the pope; but aware of the temper of the princess, the ambassadors presumed not to hold out prospect of the speedy conformity of her highness. Clement, however, hoped to make the abjuration of the princess a condition, ere he sanctioned the dissolution of Henry's marriage with Marguerite de Valois—a suit, which he judged the ambition of Gabrielle d'Estrées would shortly cause to be laid before the tribunal of the Holy See.

The important and imposing ceremony of the public reconciliation of the king with the Church, was performed on the 17th of September, 1595. The cardinals in full pontificals assembled at the Vatican, in the hall of consistory, soon after dawn. The pope engaged in prayer, and in various acts of devotion, during the greater part of the night. Matins having been said in his private chapel, Clement, arrayed in his pontifical robes, and wearing the tiara,

received the salutations of the cardinals. His holiness looked pale and downcast, and complained of pain in the limbs, arising from a slight attack of gout. The pope then took his seat in the chair, in which he was to be borne aloft to the cathedral. The procession was heralded by the papal guard, the chamberlains, the officials of the Holy Office, and the heads of the monastic establishments of Rome. The cardinals marched two and two before his holiness. Around the pope were his chaplains, the grand chamberlain Gaëtano, and a legion of almoners, priests, and ecclesiastics, standard-bearers, and officials of high degree. An elevated platform, covered with green velvet, had been erected over against the portal of the great Basilica. On this dais stood a magnificent throne and canopy of cloth of gold, to which twelve steps ascended. On each side were *fauteuils* for the members of the Sacred College. Behind the cardinals were benches for the chief officers of the holy see. The pope took his seat on the throne, surrounded by his cardinals. On the right hand of his holiness stood the members of the Holy Office; on his left, the grand penitentiary,[1] and his officials arrayed in surcoats and bearing rods, in form similar to that termed by the ancient Romans *vindicta*. When the papal court was duly installed, the chief master of the ceremonies summoned the representatives of king Henry. MM. d'Ossat and du Perron advanced, from beneath the porch of St. Peter's, and walked in procession, preceded by mace-bearers: they ascended the platform and made three obeisances, the last salute being performed at the foot of the pontifical throne. The master of the ceremonies then

[1] Cardinal de St. Severino.

demanded whether the ambassadors might be admitted to the privilege of kissing the papal slipper? This suit being granted, the envoys kneeling reverently, performed their homage. Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini, and Giovanni Francesco Aldobrandini general of the Church, another nephew of his holiness, then approached and placed themselves by the side of the ambassadors. The chief proctor of the Holy Office next put the act of the royal abjuration and confession of faith, and Henry's petition to be relieved from papal censure, into the hand of du Perron. The bishop of Evreux, with M. d'Ossat, the pope's nephews, and the proctor of the Holy Office, then knelt, while the former read the acts; and solicited, in the hearing of the people, absolution for the king, with benediction. The decree of his holiness annulling the absolution given by the French bishops was next read; a document followed by the rehearsing of the various acts of penitence performed by king Henry; and the conditions upon which his holiness had resolved to open his paternal arms to so great a sinner.[1] The ambassadors, still led by the nephews of the pope, approached a table, and laying their hands on the holy gospels, took oath on behalf of his majesty, that the king would persevere in the faith, catholic and apostolic; maintain the privileges of the church; render obedience to the Holy See; and, finally, perform the conditions upon which absolution had been vouchsafed. This ceremony over, a choir intoned the psalm "Miserere mei Domine." The royal proxies again ascended the steps of the throne,

[1] De Thou. Cayet. D'Ossat—Lettre 33. Giovanni Paolo Mercante—Relatione della Reconciliazione, Assolutione, e Beneditione di Henrico IV. fatta da Clemente VIII. alli 17 Septembri, 1595, in 4to. Viterbo, 1597.

and knelt before his holiness. The grand chamberlain Gaëtano then threw a veil of white crape over the papal hand; and presented to his holiness one of the rods upborne by the officials of the Inquisition. At the commencement of each versicle of the psalm the pope lightly struck first one ambassador, and then the other, on the shoulder with the rod, to symbolise the stripes which so notable a sinner as Henry merited. Clement, on the termination of the psalm, rose from his throne. Profound silence prevailed. The pope lifted the triple crown from his head, and prostrated himself in prayer. A pause of considerable duration ensued. His holiness then recited aloud the prayer, "Deus qui proprium," after which he resumed his tiara. In a loud and sonorous voice, Clement, standing with arms outstretched, then pronounced Henri de Bourbon king of France absolved from ecclesiastical censures. The pope, again kneeling, offered prayer for the king, that grace might be given him to persevere in the true faith; and to put from him all notable scandals to the detriment of religion, and of his own eternal salvation. The cannon of St. Angelo then saluted, the people cheered, the cardinals congratulated the ambassadors; many personages on the platform wept aloud, and prostrated themselves to receive the papal benediction. The pope affectionately embraced du Perron and d'Ossat. "I have opened the door of the Church militant to the very Christian king; may he, by the grace of God and his own good works, open to himself the portals of the Church triumphant!"[1]

[1] The pope's very words were—"Quemadmodum ipse nunc Henrico Regi januam ecclesiæ militantis in terris aperuit, ita Regem eniti debere, ab viva fide et bonis operibus, se introitûs in ecclesiam triumphantem in cœlis faciat capacem."

"Holy father," promptly replied the apt du Perron, "your holiness has opened to my king the Church militant; I assure your Beatitude that his majesty, by his faith and piety, will be able to open for himself the door of the Church triumphant." Meantime the portals of St. Peter's were thrown open. Down the lofty aisles the solemn peal of organs reverberated; while innumerable voices took up the triumphant strains of "Te Deum Laudamus." Lights blazed on all the altars and before the shrines, so that the vista into the church from the piazza is recorded to have been one of surpassing grandeur. The people crowded towards the church; but were kept back by the papal guards, who lined the way from the platform of state to the portal of St. Peter's. The cardinal de St. Severino grand penitentiary, presently descended from the dais, walking between the bishop of Evreux and d'Ossat; they were followed by the prelates and officials, witnesses of the ceremonial. The pope, preceded by his chamberlains and mace-bearers, retired to the Vatican traversing the cloister, as fatigue and emotion had seriously increased his indisposition. "Te Deum" was nevertheless chanted in the presence of the august assemblage. Many of the principal ladies of Rome witnessed the ceremony in St. Peter's; amongst others were Donna Giulia Savelli marquise de Pisani, and the pope's niece, Margarita Aldobrandini, for whom his holiness was seeking an illustrious alliance.[1] "Never were such exclamations of joy surpassed," relates d'Ossat; "the arms of France were seen everywhere, even in private houses. The poorest of the populace bought a picture of the king; as great numbers of these said portraits had been engraved

[1] Donna Margarita married the duke of Parma in 1600.

on purpose to be sold for a trifle."[1] On leaving St. Peter's the ambassadors were escorted by the cardinal de Joyeuse to the church dedicated to St. Louis, to be present at a second thanksgiving service. The coach of the cardinal de Joyeuse excited great admiration; it was gorgeously gilt and ornamented. At the back the words, "*Confundantur qui me persequuntur*" were embossed; and round the portal was the inscription, "*Henricus Quartus Galliæ et Navarre Rex Christianissimus.*"[2] The same evening Henry's indefatigable envoys attended mass in the monastery of La Trinité du Mont. The following Sunday the ambassadors publicly received the holy Eucharist, the pope officiating; his holiness having sent Father Cesare Baronius his confessor, to intimate his intentions in the matter, so that the honour and esteem in which he held the king might be manifest. The deportment of the ambassadors had been throughout skilful and dextrous. The knowledge of ecclesiastical law displayed by d'Ossat put to shame many of the papal agents sent to confer on the conditions to be imposed on the king. D'Ossat's comprehension of the laws of the realm he represented was also conspicuous; seldom at fault, ever ready with examples to prove his assertions, and acting with scrupulous reserve, d'Ossat never had the mortification to withdraw, or modify any proposition. At the commencement of the negotiation pope Clement wished to exact from the deputies of the king an acknowledgment of the universal suzerainty of the pope. It had been proposed to issue a decree, reinstating Henri de Navarre in his kingly rights and preroga-

[1] Lettre 33.

[2] Chronique de Paul Piasecki, évêque Polonais, an eye-witness.

tives, such having been forfeited under the interdicts of successive popes. D'Ossat, however, firmly refuted the arrogant pretension; and refused to permit the term "rehabilitation" to be used in any decree or mandate. During many a sturdy argument, backed by profound erudition and judicial lore, the vivacious and witty du Perron was compelled to remain a silent listener of the conferences. Cardinal Aldobrandini and du Perron, however, assimilated well; and as the verdict of the all-powerful minister was omnipotent, M. du Perron beheld himself overwhelmed with courtesies. He also obtained an assurance that the pope, before his departure, would give him canonical installation in his bishopric of Evreux; and promote him at the first opportunity to the cardinalate.[1] An express was despatched to king Henry, after the papal absolution had been pronounced, to notify the event. The envoy was Baptisto Mancini, whose son eventually espoused the sister of cardinal Mazarin.[2] Letters were also written by the pope, requesting his "very dear son, the Christian king," to ratify the acts of his deputies; and to forward the *procès verbal* of such confirmation to Rome to be deposited in the papal archives. His holiness also notified the approaching departure of a nuncio, "who would witness and report all the pious actions of his majesty." Henry received intelligence that his absolution was to be pronounced before he

[1] "M. le cardinal Toleto s'est laissé entendre plusieurs fois, que s'il plaisoit à votré majesté de faire cardinal M. du Perron S. S. le feroit volontiers à la première promotion, qui se fera a ces quatre temps du mois de Decembre prochain."—Lettre d'Ossat au roy—lettre 36.

[2] Therefore the first Mancini who visited France in an official capacity carried the despatch announcing the reconciliation of Henri Quatre to the church.

quitted Lyons. A thanksgiving service was performed in the cathedral; and for several days the citizens celebrated the event by processions, illuminations, fireworks, and public shows. The king was present at one of the services; and although Henry demonstrated gladness that at length the ban of virtual interdict was removed from the realm, yet anxiety to retrieve his losses in Picardy evidently absorbed the royal mind. The news, moreover, from Provence threatened disaster. Epernon, who appears at times demented from pride and ambition, continued to harass the royal partisans in Provence; and during Henry's sojourn in Lyons was besieging the count de Carcés in Salon. The duke held frequent conferences with the duke of Savoy; and even abetted the latter in besieging Cavours, though it is not certain that any treasonable alliance subsisted between the belligerents. Epernon made war apparently for the gratification of asserting his independence; he could brook no rival; he now equally defied Lesdiguières, and the constable de Montmorency; and persecuted all who demonstrated respect for their authority. Henry, therefore, resolved to remove so rebellious a subject from the high command which he thus abused. Letters patent were issued, signed by the king, bestowing the government of Provence on the young duke de Guise, whose valour at Fontaine Française had been justly commended. M. de Lesdiguières accepted the office of lieutenant to the duke de Guise, and was replaced in the government of Dauphiny by the marshal d'Ornano.[1] Montmorency was commissioned by his

[1] The king had hesitated whether to bestow the baton of marshal on his brave Huguenot captain Lesdiguières rather than on Ornano. The doubt threw the pope into a condition

majesty to instal the new governor; and in case M. d'Epernon presumed to resist the mandate, he received orders to turn the force at his command to subdue the rebels. The appointment of Guise over Provence gave rise to warm debates in the council assembled at Lyons. It was alleged that the example of M. de Mercœur evidenced the impolicy of appointing puissant nobles to supreme command over provinces to which they asserted an hereditary right. Provence was claimed by the princes of Lorraine as the descendants of king René and Isabel, duchess de Lorraine; whose eldest daughter[1] and heiress espoused the count de Vaudemont. Louis XI., however, asserted his right to this territory; and had united it to the crown, in virtue of the will of Charles count de Provence and titular king of Naples, his cousin-german.

The king was not to be diverted from his purpose; he observed that the alleged right to Provence was vested in the duke of Lorraine, and not in the junior house of Guise; which was now depressed and incapable of hostile enterprise from pecuniary embarrassment. Cheverny, nevertheless, declined to seal the patent unless guaranteed from the possible consequences by an act under the royal sign manual, and

of exasperated suspense. His holiness said that such conduct on the part of the king would cause the holy see to fall under the censure of catholic Christendom: "Chacun me blameroit de l'avoir absout; et moi même j'en aurois eu si grande honte et regret que j'en serais mort! si sa majesté eut donné l'état de maréchal de France a Lesdiguières, je serois tombé à terre mort!"—Lettres d'Ossat.

[1] Mezeray—Grande Histoire. Duclos, Vie de Louis XI.—The mother of Louis XI., Marie d'Anjou, was the aunt of Charles, king of Naples, and of Yolande, duchess de Lorraine, consort of Frederic, count de Vaudemont.

that of the four secretaries of state. Henry consented thus to satisfy the scruples of the chancellor; but not content even with this guarantee Cheverny wrote with his own hand on the parchment below the seal, "that at the express command of his majesty, but against his own conviction, he expedited the act which elevated M. de Guise to chief command over Provence."[1] The humble deportment of Guise had propitiated the king; who was, moreover, confirmed in his gracious intent towards the young prince by Rosny, whose admiration for the duchess de Guise was ever excessive. The duke promised to act always under the advice of M. de Lesdiguières, and to conduct himself with reserve and moderation. The first news from Provence, however, after the arrival there of Guise, seemed to vindicate the scruples of the chancellor. The duke, in reality, was much piqued at being placed under *surveillance*. By the advice of two unworthy favourites he demonstrated unwillingness to yield to counsel; and to emancipate himself therefrom, M. de Guise had recourse eventually to so artful a deportment as greatly to disgust Lesdiguières; and to render an appeal to his majesty requisite. The king appointed M. de Guiche to the government of Lyons; and then departed for Paris, *en route* to Picardy.

Henry arrived in his capital about the 1st of

[1] De Thou. Mém. du Chancelier de Cheverny. Cheverny's conduct resembled that of the famous chancellor of Charles V., Gattinara, who, refusing to affix the great seal to the treaty of Madrid, which restored Francis I. to liberty, the emperor himself sealed, signed, and expedited the document out of respect for the scruples of his chancellor.—Sandoval, Vida de Don Carlos V., tome 2.

October. Public disquietude was great. The king was depressed by the reverses in Picardy; and his people at the prospect of the fresh taxes which awaited them. The presence of the king relieved the members of the council from their most arduous function—the necessity of daily agreement in matters of state. The parliament of Paris deputed its principal members to condole with, and at the same time to congratulate his majesty on his military successes in Burgundy; and on the happy tidings transmitted from Rome. The fluent and polished periods with which the late king used to regale his subjects Henry could not imitate. His majesty's rhetoric was crude and abrupt; and yet no monarch ever expressed more precisely his sentiments and wishes. A long oration exhausted the royal patience to such a degree that Henry could not help manifesting irritation; or he ended the harangue by some facetious *mot*. The king's reply to his parliament contained rather an exaggerated statement of the public necessity. Henry wished to stimulate the liberality of the members; for he burned to find himself at the head of his army of Picardy to cast Fuentes from his realm, as he had vanquished the constable Velasco. "Messieurs," said his majesty, "I have made a long journey, yet not so long as I desired; for could I have commanded six weeks longer there (in Burgundy) I should have well cleansed my country. God, however, will aid me as He has always done. I have travelled to you post, by the counsel of some of my most faithful servants. I have, as you know, triumphed over my enemies; but to God be this glory. You say that where I am affairs prosper; this is true, for thanks be to God the constable of Castile could not prevail over me!

I cannot, however, be everywhere, and you know what has happened in Picardy. I accuse no one of want of conduct or courage: of the last quality there was too much. If I had been present, I may venture to assert that such a reverse would not have happened. You admonish me that I hazard my life too freely; but, messieurs, unless I lead you perceive that nobody advances: my troops for the most part are volunteers, whom I cannot order forwards. If I had money to pay an extra number of regular regiments, my life would not so often be placed in peril. I therefore require money, and the edicts which to-morrow will be presented to you must obviate this necessity. If you accept them willingly I shall owe you infinite obligation: first, for your ready concession to my desires; secondly, because my life will not be so often in jeopardy. I am well in health; I came here at a trot, and I mean to depart at a gallop (*je suis venu a pas, et je retourne au galop*). I want nothing but money. I have lost my best horses; I must purchase others. I ask not for money to spend in masques and ballets; but I demand it to deliver our country from invasion. I have 6,000 Frenchmen; Sancy has enlisted 3,000 *reiters;* the Low Countries send me help; the queen of England gives me aid. Help me, therefore! You will soon have assurance that never have you had a better king than myself; or one who, for your sakes, wishes less to endanger his life."[1] This address was pronounced with great animation of manner. The members enthusiastically assured the king that his edicts should be accepted, and the treasury replenished. The king next wrote to queen Elizabeth

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. de Beth. — MS. 9214. Also, published of M. Berger de Xivrey.—Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.

and to Essex and Cecil to announce his approaching journey to attempt the assault of Cambray. He claimed the aid of the queen to put down the Spaniards, whose policy it was to embroil the realms of France and England. The king quitted Paris; on the 6th of October, his majesty having postponed rejoicings for his reconciliation with Rome until more precise tidings of the event reached Paris, accompanied by intelligence that pope Clement had nominated a resident nuncio. Henry had been so often deceived by the Holy See, that he wisely resolved to have perfect confirmation of the amicable disposition of his holiness, before commanding public fêtes in the capital.

Madame, meanwhile, angry and indisposed, did not visit the king during his brief sojourn in Paris, while Henry had not leisure to seek his sister at St. Germain. The princess complained of the treatment which M. de Soissons received from his majesty; who she said had taken no pains since the *fracas* at Troyes to encourage the overtures made by the count towards reconciliation. Soissons, however, desired that the king, before he again presented himself, should reassure him by letter as to his reception and position at court. The king dreaded such a correspondence, with its petty recriminations and complaints: he had, therefore, written peremptorily to desire M. de Soissons to present himself at Lyons,[1] where Henry promised to enlighten him as to the effect produced on his mind,

[1] "Si vous eussiez tant desiré, comme vous dites de vous esclaircir de ce que j'avois a vous dire vous me feûtes venu trouver a Dijon, comme vous me l'aviez promis. Je serai en bref a Lyons."—Lettre du roi a M. le comte de Soissons.—Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1009. MS.

by the count's conduct at Troyes. M. de Soissons, therefore, remained in sullen displeasure at his castle of Maillé, where he solaced himself by planning an expedition to Hungary, to aid the emperor Rodolph in his contest with the Turks. The *ennui* of Madame at her lonely state at St. Germain, and her grief at the hostility between her brother and M de Soissons so weighed upon her spirits, that a serious illness had ensued during the absence of the king in Burgundy Madame wrote a letter, filled with reproaches, to the king:—"Sire, that consent which you gave in 1583 to our union, you have now no right to cancel I have accepted the suit of M. de Soissons at your bidding, and I will never withdraw my faith." The princess then fretfully complains that the king had never made donation to her, of her share of the heritage of the deceased queen Jeanne, their mother—an unworthy taunt, probably suggested by Soissons, as Henry's liberality had been great to his sister. Madame, moreover, had strictly commanded her servants not to inform his majesty of her illness. The intelligence, nevertheless, soon reached the king, and occasioned him great annoyance; for despite their broils Henry and his sister Catherine were sincerely attached; an affection promptly demonstrated in sorrow or calamity. "I knew that my sister was ill, but had forbidden any of her ladies and officers to notify the fact to me," angrily writes the king to M. de la Force, chamberlain to Madame; "I therefore resolved to make no inquiry after her health; fearing lest my message might displease her, and even render her worse. Nevertheless, I am much displeased with madame de la Barre; as whatever might be the orders of her mistress, it was her first duty to apprize me of my sister's illness. I shall

intimate my sentiments to the said lady when we meet. I have, moreover, to inform you that I have lately received a letter from my said sister which offends me deeply; she showers upon me humble abuse and great ill-will; her words are gentle, it is true, but she reproaches me as bitterly as she can, as you will see when you peruse the letter. Amongst the many anxieties which oppress me, there is not one which I feel so keenly. I shall continue, however, to act in the capacity of her father, brother, and king, and to fulfil my duty, although she chooses to neglect her own, and defy me. To-morrow I despatch M. de Roquelaure to inform my sister of my will and intentions; he will also confide in you."[1] The special mission of Roquelaure was to speak to the princess on pecuniary matters; as the king forthwith commanded that Madame should have her share assigned of the maternal heritage; and appointed commissioners to make the requisite transfers. This concession does not appear to have conciliated the princess; for she made no effort to see her brother during the five days which Henry spent in Paris after his return from Lyons.

Henry arrived at Peronne on the 14th of October, two days after the fall of Cambray. The king's regret was extreme for the loss of the Cambresis; he, moreover, found the dukes de Montpensier and de Nevers ill; the former, incapacited for a time from active service; the latter smitten by death.[2] The

[1] Egerton Papers—British Museum, f. 116. Also published Mém. de la Force by the Marquis de la Grange, and by M. Berger de Xivrey—Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.

[2] "Le Dimanche, 23 Octobre, 1595, mourut à Nesle en Picardie Monseigneur le duc de Nevers, prince regrettable par sa valeur, sagesse, et bon conseil." "Bon capitaine, bon conseiller, meilleur François, que les François eux-même!" says Aubigné.

duke de Bouillon likewise waited on his majesty, and requested permission, as the campaign seemed ended, to visit Sedan, where he said his newly-married consort was leading a melancholy life. The king assented; and then himself commenced to repair the disasters occasioned by the rivalries and misconduct of his lieutenants. He garrisoned St. Quentin, and other towns on the Somme; and prepared for the siege of La Fère, an important place, which had been ceded by M. de Mayenne to the duke of Parma in 1593. The king sent Sancy to request further succour from queen Elizabeth, and to thank her majesty for a reinforcement of 4000 soldiers. The states of the Netherlands likewise promised an aid of twelve companies of foot, under count Justin de Nassau; and the assembly prayed his majesty to defend himself valiantly against the perfidious enterprises of Spain. News from Provence, also, reached Henry during his abode at Peronne. The duke d'Epernon, far from obeying the royal mandate, made contumacious resistance, and defied the arms and expostulation of the constable, the duke de Guise, and Lesdiguières. A conspiracy against his life at Brignoles was the first incident that sobered Epernon's audacious designs. A peasant, who had been ruined by the civil war, placed two sacks of gunpowder in a cellar beneath an apartment in which Epernon and his aides-de-camp were to dine. An explosion ensued; the floor of the chamber in which the duke sat blew up, and flames burst forth. The duke was wounded in the leg and right arm; his hair and beard were burned, his escape from further injury being deemed a miracle. The aides-de-camp, also, were severely maimed; while several persons were killed. Bergues, the intended assassin, escaped to Aix, and

carried the tidings of the supposed death of Epernon to the duke de Guise, who transmitted the intelligence to Paris.[1] The king, meantime, indignantly addressed Montmorency on the duke's insolent defiance. "What! *mon cousin*, the said duke dares to despise my authority! I have resolved to employ every resource to punish such shameless treason, and to make the said duke return to his duty."[2] The king, with admirable policy, again makes the constable the arbiter of his quarrel with Epernon; which had the effect of enlisting Montmorency in the royal interest—a devotion perhaps doubtful, had Henry at once issued a decree deposing Epernon from his dignities. The south of France was then comparatively loyal. The constable held Languedoc—the parliament of Toulouse had recently declared for the king; and had quitted the city in a body, leaving behind the governor the ex-capuchin duke de Joyeuse, and a few recreant members still intent upon rebellion. Lesdiguières had restored tranquillity to Dauphiny, and garrisoned the strongholds of the principality. The attainder of Epernon, therefore, might have again convulsed the country, and have rendered these potent nobles, his kinsmen, hostile. Throughout his correspondence, the king asserts his willingness to receive the duke at court, and to employ him near to his person. When Epernon beheld the king resolved to quell the civil war in Provence, and to depose him from his govern-

[1] Cayet. Girard—Vie du duc d'Epernon. The Marquise de Monceaux announced the news of Epernon's demise at a crowded assembly at her hôtel, with great signs of gladness and triumph.

[2] MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. fr. 1009. Xi-rey—Lettres Missives de Henri IV.

ment—his majesty even expressing his resolve to take the command in person to accomplish that object—his boastful defiance abated.[1] The attempt on his life, moreover, had affected him; also the duke of Savoy had lately shown inclination to treat with Henri IV., provided that a satisfactory expedient could be devised to settle the vexed question of the marquisate of Saluzzo. The duke would then have been thrown on his own resources; and Epernon was too wily to involve himself in such predicament.

Henry continued his journey to Amiens. The king arrived on the 16th of October, 1595, fatigued, and not in the mood to listen to the tedious harangue which it was then the fashion to inflict on monarchs when they entered a town. The municipality were, however, at the gate waiting with their oration. The provost advanced, and commenced, "King! most mighty, clement, benign!" "Stop!" cried his majesty, "those titles suffice; add only, 'and very weary!'" The authorities, not taking the hint, prosed through their harangue, and then escorted the king to his abode. A repast stood ready, and Henry was about to sit down to table, when a second deputation entered to bid his majesty welcome. "Sire," commenced the spokesman of the new comers, "Agesilaus, king of Lacedæmon—" "*Ventre St. Gris!*" exclaimed his majesty, whose irritation and hunger had become irrepressible, "*j'ai bien oüi parler de cet Agesilaus; mais il avoit diné, et je n'ai pas diné moi!*" The lords present then interposed: assuring the discomfited envoys

[1] The duke d'Epernon had usurped authority over Provence, never having been nominated as governor. This office he seized on the demise of his elder brother, M. de la Valette.

that the king would grant them audience after he had reposed, they ushered the deputation from the hall. The king had a nervous dread of a long oration. The past troubles of the realm, and the long *exposés* of grievances which each faction deemed it incumbent to present to the chief of the state, rendered these oratorical displays frequent. Henry more than once rose impatiently from his chair, saying to the astonished orator, with infinite *naïveté*, "*Ah, çà! assez. Vous direz le reste à M. le Chancelier; et après je vous ferai reponse.*"

On the 6th of November, Henry commenced the blockade of La Fère — a siege which lasted longer than any other undertaken by his majesty. The place was defended by Colas sénéchal de Montélimart and by Don Alvaro Osorio. The king of Spain had bestowed upon Colas the dignity of conde de la Fère, in reprisal for the title of prince de Cambray, which had been assumed by M. de Balagny. The royal head-quarters were fixed by the king at Travercy; eventually, however, his majesty paid occasional visits only to the camp, though he directed all military operations. The design of the king was to reduce La Fère, pending the interval of the installation of the cardinal archduke Albert as viceroy of Flanders, in order afterwards to meet the Spanish army in force on the frontier. The siege-works were carried on with vigour and despatch; as the toleration of a foreign garrison in a town so distant from the frontier was esteemed a disgrace to the arms of France. Beringhen, the king's first *valet de chambre*,[1] presented to his majesty

[1] Mém. de Sully. De Thou. Beringhen was indebted to his brother, an engineer in the service of the States of Holland, for this plan, which proved a lamentable failure. This Beringhen

a scheme for the inundation of La Fère, by turning the waters of the Oise from their course by means of an embankment and dike. The plan was adopted by the king despite its enormous cost, and the works commenced.

From Travercy Henry wrote his first letter of acknowledgment to the supreme pontiff for the boon of his absolution. The royal silence had caused much consternation and misgiving in the papal city. The duke of Sessa triumphantly commented on the impenitent hardness displayed by le Béarnnois; who even grudged his holiness thanks for the inestimable boon recently conferred. D'Ossat, unable to devise further excuse for so surprising a silence on the part of his majesty, wrote to Villeroy to express the displeasure evinced by Clement and his cardinals—a missive which crossed with that of the king. D'Ossat stated that M. d'Elbêne, nevertheless, had been despatched on a special mission to carry the Bull of absolution to the king; and that great intrigues were in agitation to obtain the mission of legate in France—a nomination which apparently rested between the cardinals de Toleto, Aldobrandini, and de Medici. "We have received no letter from the king, nor from you, since the missives you sent from Lyons in date of the 20th and 24th of September, at which the pope and MM. his nephews, and indeed the entire household of his holiness, and every notable personage about this court, are astounded—knowing, as every one does, that the king received the news of his absolution about the 1st day of October. No

had been first taken into the royal service for his skill in polishing armour. His influence during the last years of his master's reign was great, and he participated in all the endless palace intrigues of that period.

one can divine how it happens that during these two months now elapsed, his holiness has not received a little letter of thanks. The Spaniards and their adherents make comments thereupon in accordance with their ancient malevolence." D'Ossat announces that his excuses and allusion to Cambray and his majesty's military affairs had failed to pacify; and that the indignation of the pope would doubtlessly have been evidenced, had not the constable Montmorency fortunately written to thank his holiness for the 'grace conferred, not only on the king, but on the realm of France.[1] Henry's letter, which was written from the camp of Travercy, must have been humble and flattering enough to appease any lingering resentment in the heart of the supreme pontiff—"Most Holy Father, as I acknowledge that it is utterly beyond my power to thank your holiness by letter for the grace which you have vouchsafed in granting me your holy benediction and sovereign absolution, I feel doubly incensed against my enemies that they have power to prevent me from enjoying the honour and satisfaction of being able in person to prostrate myself at the feet of your holiness; in order that my recognition of your goodness and benevolence may be as signal as the gratitude which it is my intention to evidence."[2] The king continues in this strain throughout a long letter; he supplicates Clement to take him and the realm of France under the especial protection of the Holy See; and prays from time to time to be permitted to render his holiness account, as a dutiful son, of his progress and designs! His majesty, moreover, wrote to the cardinals de Toleto, Joyeuse, and

[1] A. M. de Villeroy—Lettre 41.

[2] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Bèth.—8934, fol. 40.

Aldobrandini, and also to the fathers Baronius and Seraphino, testifying his joy at his reconciliation with the church; and his gratitude for the aid afforded by these illustrious personages. "The king's letter," writes the minute d'Ossat to M. de Villeroy, "was read aloud in consistory, and was pronounced marvellously beautiful; it has given infinite content to everybody. The cardinals, honoured by a letter from the king, received the missive with demonstrations of intense gladness and honour."[1] With Henry's letter arrived copies of the circular[2] addressed to the prelates of the realm, commanding thanksgiving services throughout every see, and signed by the king: "the content and delight thereon of this court cannot be exaggerated," writes d'Ossat. Clement, therefore, promised to interfere authoritatively in behalf of the royal cause in Provence: he forthwith granted letters of induction to the see of Evreux to du Perron; and delayed an approaching nomination of new cardinals until Whitsuntide of the year 1596, that king Henry might select three candidates for the purple. Philip II., after a life of gloomy and almost servile obedience to the Holy See, saw himself on his deathbed superseded in the papal favour, by the archheretic whose destruction he had pursued with determined rancour.

From Henry's camp at Travercy other important ordinances were issued. Cheverny and Villeroy were in attendance on the king; who by the secret advice of Rosny had dissolved the council of state, which during the campaign in Burgundy could agree

[1] Lettre 42.

[2] Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.—Archives du Royaume. Lettre H.

upon nothing, while the feuds of its members became the scandal of Paris. M. de Sancy retained the direction of the finances, much to the discontent of Gabrielle d'Estreés, who never ceased her solicitations that the king would bestow that office upon Rosny. The latter remained in the seclusion of Muret, where he occupied his leisure in planting the park and pleasure-grounds of his domain, and in forming a lake; not forgetting occasionally to forward to his majesty a pungent letter, commenting on the incapacity of the ministers, and on the waste of public treasure. Henry would have rejoiced to dismiss these personages *en masse*, with the exception of the chancellor, so persuaded was his majesty of their want of ability and peculations. A great crisis, however, was needed to stimulate Henry to so vigorous, and perhaps doubtful, an exercise of his prerogative. His letters to Rosny, meanwhile, are filled with complaints, and with demands for private counsel—an underhand manner of asking his services very galling to the sensitive and proud temper of M. de Rosny. A mandate was meanwhile transmitted by the king from Travercy, commanding that the honours due to a prince, heir-presumptive of the realm, might be rendered to the young Condé in all towns which he entered *en route* from St. Jean d'Angely to St. Germain en Laye, where the prince was to reside. Henry issued injunctions that Condé should be instructed in the Romish faith; and selected the household and tutors of the young prince with vigilant regard to their orthodoxy. Madame de Condé meanwhile, whose sentence had not yet been annulled, took up her abode in the Hôtel de Condé, rue Grenelle, under the *surveillance* of personages appointed by the nobles who had answered

for her appearance at the bar of the Chambers. Great honours were paid to the prince, who had just completed his seventh year. The parliament marched in procession—the members arrayed in their scarlet gowns—to receive him at St. Germain; an honour never before paid to a prince of the royal blood. The king committed the prince to the guardianship of Pisani, with the most flattering expressions of esteem for the veteran diplomatist. "If I had a son, dauphin of France, I would commit him to your care; I therefore give you the training of the prince who perhaps may reign after me."[1] The appointments of the marquis were the same as those of a governor of the dauphin. Pisani seems, on the whole, to have discharged his duties conscientiously; and he essayed to curb the intolerable pride of the young prince, which had been fostered by his seclusion at St. Jean. One day the prince and his tutor were riding in the forest of St. Germain. A peasant, meeting the *cortége*, threw himself prostrate on the ground in a tremor of veneration. Condé turned aside, haughtily murmuring the words, "*Bah! manant!*" "Monsieur, I beg your attention for a few moments," said Pisani: "salute this poor man; there are none, it is true, of meaner station than this wretched clown, neither are there any private personages of more exalted rank than yourself; yet, if he and his fellows refused to cultivate the earth, you and your equals would soon die of famine; therefore,

[1] When the king appointed Pisani as governor of the young prince, his majesty asked the marquis—"Que lui apprendrez vous?" "A bien servir votre majesté et l'Etat!" replied the ready courtier.—Lettres de Pasquier. Nicholas Le Fèvre was appointed preceptor to Condé, and the presidents de Thou and de Harlay as examiners.

monseigneur, I again bid you salute this poor peasant, who honours you as he is able."[1] The young prince, by command of the king, made his recantation in the chapel of St. Germain during the month of January of the following year. He attended mass thenceforth daily; and received theological instruction from the cardinal de Gondy.

The extraordinary honours lavished on the young Condé excited the jealous indignation of M. de Soissons, who during the wars of the league had constantly affirmed the prince to be illegitimate; and therefore not entitled to the dignities of a prince of the blood, or to the heritage of Condé. Opinions differed as to the guilt of the princess de Condé. The sentiments of the king on the subject it is impossible quite to ascertain; every written allusion certainly appears as if Henry, while feeling no doubt of the reality of the crime committed, yet deemed it politic to connive in the acquittal of the princess. The following letter, addressed by the king to Soissons, from the château of Folembray — in reply to an impertinent missive from the latter, enjoining the king to cause M. de Condé at least to be educated in the orthodox faith—exhibits the anomaly that while Henry was authorizing the recognition of the prince as heir presumptive, he taunted the count with the little energy with which the latter pursued the case against Madame de Condé, and the other persons accused.

The King to M. the Count de Soissons.

"Mon Cousin—As I did not wait for your counsels to

[1] Vie de Marquis de Pisani—Historiettes de Tallemant des Réaux, vol. 1.

summon my nephew the prince de Condé to reside near my person, it is not, therefore, necessary that you should advise me to have the said prince nurtured in the catholic faith, as you admonish me in a letter lately received. You certainly are well informed of my resolve in this matter, which is also universally known. Do you indeed desire to acquit yourself as you ought, and as you are bound in respect to the memory of the late prince de Condé, your brother? Pursue then, with greater ardour and determination, the judicial investigations concerning his death. You know that I cannot, as king and judge, move in this matter, else I should not cede the office to you; for great is my desire to accomplish right and justice—matters which others content themselves with writing upon. I pray God, mon cousin, to have you in His holy keeping.—From Folembray, this 15th day of December, 1595."[1]

When he wrote this epistle the king had quitted the camp of Travercy, to pass the Christmas festival of 1595 at Folembray.[2] Madame was expected to make a short sojourn there, to take leave of the king before her departure for Fontainebleau. The annoyance which the princess experienced from the misunderstandings between the king and M. de Soissons; and the obstacles which she encountered at court in the exercise of her faith, combined to induce Madame to take temporary leave of the capital. The dignity of the princess was also wounded by the ascendancy of Gabrielle d'Estrées, who presided as queen at all the festivities of the court. Catherine, moreover,

[1] Scrieys—Lettres de Henri IV. à plusieurs personnages célèbres. Lettres Missives de Henri IV. Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, MS. 407, fol. 16.

[2] Folembray, a famous hunting palace of Francis I. and Henry II.

had great desire to be rid of solicitations respecting her marriage with the duke de Montpensier, a theme constantly introduced by the king; while she dreaded the progress of Henry's negotiation to bestow her hand on the duke de Bar. Henry, it must be owned, showed little delicacy for the feelings of Madame in the matrimonial persecutions with which she was continually beset. Gabrielle d'Estrées likewise repaired to Folembray to pass the festival with the king; the little prince César Monsieur accompanied his mother, who was attended by a superb retinue. The pleasure of Madame was considerably diminished by the unexpected presence of the favourite; who monopolized his majesty, and promoted revels and divers *petits jeux* grievously offensive to the religious notions of the princess. Madame, moreover, was attended by Madame de Guiche, who kindled the hot temper of the princess; so that the deportment of the latter, and her allusions relative to "le petit César," greatly irritated Madame de Monceaux. Early during the month Gabrielle, therefore, quitted Folembray for Paris. Madame de Monceaux avoided open hostilities: it was a part of the system which she had prescribed as the rule of her daily life, the ultimate reward of which was to be the queenly diadem. The evening previous to the departure of Gabrielle d'Estrées Henry visited his sister in her room, holding in his arms his infant son, César. Madame was in bed, suffering indisposition from cold and great disturbance in mind. Henry seated himself by the bed, and began to converse with his sister, expostulating with her for her persistence in an alliance so distasteful to him as that with Soissons; and entering into details respecting his recent *démêlés* with the latter. The chamber of Madame

was ancient, and situated in a wing, which had suffered damage from the incendiary attempt of queen Mary regent of the Low Countries, in 1554, to fire the palace of Folembray, in reprisal for the burning of her château of Bins by French soldiery during the reign of Henry II. The damp situation of the palace, surrounded by dense forests, had completed the ruin partly achieved by the invader, and rendered many apartments of the château dangerous to inhabit. Whilst the king, therefore, was conversing with Madame the rafters of the floor suddenly gave way, precipitating everything but the alcove, in which stood the bed of the princess, into a hall below. Henry fortunately saved himself on the first crash by springing upon his sister's bed, with his son in his arms; for the chair which his majesty had just occupied fell through. Two waiting women of the princess were seriously injured by the fall of heavy pieces of furniture. The alarm was intense in the palace, and speedy measures were adopted for the rescue of his majesty and the princess. The king, however, indulged in transports of laughter at his ludicrous position; and while he gazed on the rueful countenances of the lords of the household, when from below they stood contemplating the plight of their royal master. The Huguenots pronounced the accident ominous; and likened the reformed faith to the couch of Madame, which amid ruin had remained stable, and proved a haven of safety to the royal person.[1]

After the departure of Madame for Fontainebleau, which event was hastened by the accident related, Henry summoned his principal counsellors to determine, accept, and ratify the conditions of the treaty

[1] Journal de Henri IV.—L'Estoile.

pending with the duke de Mayenne. The promises and flatteries of Mayenne and the princes of the house of Lorraine had completely won the aid of madame de Monceaux. They suffered her to contemplate the royal diadem as her own, and the honours of a dauphin of France for her son César. Gabrielle believed that the potent house which had all but won the crown; and the aid of him whom his colleagues in the early days of the Union loved to designate as "Dux optimus," in conjunction with the royal power, could not fail to insure her coveted elevation. Consequently the Marquise supported the cause of Mayenne; and made warm intercession for his restoration to his dignities, and to the confidence of the king. The young duchess-elect de Nevers, Mayenne's eldest daughter, further propitiated madame Gabrielle by winning assiduities. The duke de Guise wrote to Gabrielle, and prayed for her sympathy; while even Madame de Montpensier became a constant visitant at the hôtel Schomberg, the private mansion of Madame la Marquise. Jeannin, Villeroy, and the archbishop of Lyons Espinac, had continued to negotiate the terms of Mayenne's submission from the period of the surrender of Dijon. The great obstacle to agreement was "the prosecution of the investigation to discover and punish all concerned in the regicidal deed committed on the person of the late king." Mayenne demanded the issue of a declaration from the king, absolving himself and the princes of Lorraine from share or connivance in the crime. "We will not leave a door open for any future and vindictive assault of our enemies," wisely said the duke.[1] This concession was perseveringly combated by the queen dowager Louise, by Diane

[1] Vie du duc de Mayenne. De Thou.

duchesse d'Angoulême, and by the members of the parliament of Paris—exiles from the capital during the prosperous days of the Holy Union. The king himself was willing to drop the veil of oblivion over the excesses of the past; but the sentiments of the majority of his subjects indicated a desire to affix the odium of so cowardly an assassination on its true perpetrators and abettors. Hence the despair of madame de Montpensier, the anxiety of Mayenne—who, however, volunteered to purge himself, by oath from complicity in the crime—and the wavering allegiance of those amnestied by previous edicts; as the words, "*à la reserve de tous ceux qui auroient eu part au parricide de Henri III.*," carefully qualified preceding clauses. Henry therefore sent a mandate requiring the presence at Folembray of the attorney-general and other officers entrusted with the investigation of the crime. Accordingly, the first president, de Harlay, Le Guesle attorney-general, and the president Seguier, whose high legal acquirements were then being developed, repaired to confer with his majesty. Henry attentively perused the minutes submitted to him. No positive proofs had been ascertained of the collusion of Mayenne, and of the princes and princesses of Lorraine, in the cabal which had armed the monk Clement. Indirect and circumstantial testimony existed abundantly; but neither letter, mandate, nor any written document whatever, compromised the princes. The evidence criminated La Chapelle Marteau, then provost of Paris, whose ferocious zeal was demonstrated by certain missives written from Amboise, exhorting to and counselling the regicidal deed as the sole means of saving the realm, and of dissolving the alliance between Henry III. and the king of Navarre. The

remaining articles demanded by the duke de Mayenne were ambitious enough; and seemed to indicate consciousness on the duke's part that he possessed the ear of the most influential of the royal counsellors—Madame Gabrielle, Villeroy, Rosny, and of Henry's confessor, the famous ex-*curé* Benoit, now bishop-elect of Troyes. The king was asked to grant pardon to the duke de Mayenne, and amnesty to his friends and adherents: "His majesty being fully convinced, after the perusal of the minutes of examinations conducted before the princes of the blood, lords, and privy counsellors, that the princes and princesses once in arms against his authority had no part or share in the crime perpetrated on the person of the late king; they having, moreover, taken solemn oath in the presence of his said majesty, of their innocence of the said regicidal deed—the king, therefore, interdicts all further cognizance and molestation of the said crime and personages to the members of the high courts of the realm, and to the parliaments; and directs his attorney-general to annul every pending and future process." The edict contained in all thirty-one clauses. The king permitted the duke de Mayenne to retain three strongholds, and the towns of Soissons, Seure, and Châlons sur Saône for the space of six years; and interdicted protestants from holding assemblies in the locality during the interval of the duke's tenure. Every sentence pronounced during the civil war was annulled; and no prosecutions could be established for libels, pamphlets, or manifestoes published during the interval. Henry confirmed all gifts, benefactions, offices, and grants of the public money made by the council of Union; on condition that the grace or benefaction should first be solemnly revoked, and the

patent or donation reconferred in the name of the king. The church received discharge for the tithes paid into the treasury of the Union. The dukes de Mercœur and d'Aumale were comprehended in the amnesty; and the sentence against the latter was suspended during a given interval, to allow the duke leisure for reflection and submission. The royal clemency was extended to the duke de Joyeuse, marquis de Villars, MM. de Lestrange and de la Ganache, and other zealous leaguers. Finally, Henry crowned his bounty by presenting the duke de Mayenné with the sum of 350,000 gold crowns; and, by a royal ordinance, granting him protection against suits, and forbidding the creditors of Mayenne to molest him for the space of one year. His majesty, moreover, undertook to pay all arrears owing to Swiss, Germans, and other foreign troops, as if their enrolment had been made by royal command. The king also promised to bestow his personal favour on Mayenne, and to grant him an interview at the termination of the campaign; for the health of the duke was now so feeble, from fatigue and anxiety, as to render his journey to Folembray impossible.[1] The extent of these political and pecuniary concessions excited misgivings as to the reception of the edict by the parliament of Paris. The clause which specially exonerated the princes of Lorraine-Guise from participation in the murder of the late king, which event it was known they had promoted and justified, even if the dagger had not been actually placed by Mayenne in the hand of Clement, evoked clamorous protest. Henry, therefore, sent for the chancellor of queen Louise, Guil-

[1] De Thou, liv. 115. Vie du duc de Mayenne. Fornier, Hist. de la Maison de Guise.

laume Châteauneuf, and forbade him to oppose the registration in the name of the widowed queen, under penalty of incurring the royal displeasure. The king also despatched Bellièvre to intimate his will to Diane de France duchesse d'Angoulême; a princess distinguished for her attachment to the Valois, and her courage in withstanding unjust exercise of arbitrary power.[1] When the edict was presented to the parliament the greatest uproar ensued; everyone was scandalised at the easy manner in which the assassination of Henry III. had been consigned to oblivion. "The crime of madame de Condé will next be condoned," was the prediction of many. No member dared to protest against the will of the king so fully notified in behalf of a culprit still powerful as was Mayenne. Madame d'Angoulême, however, notwithstanding the intimation she had received, drew up a protest against the clause of amnesty offered to "the slayers of the late king," and presented it herself to the Chambers, in the name of queen Louise. The duchess was, however, informed that the memorial could not be received unless authenticated by the signature of the queen. Madame d'Angoulême thereupon despatched a gentleman to Chenonceau; who returned at the end of three days, bringing a second very ample memorial from Louise. This spirited act was much applauded. Henry's royal convenience, and the importunities of his mistress had been consulted, it was felt, rather than equity, throughout the clauses of the now cele-

[1] Henry writes a letter, stating his will on the edict, and recounting the notification which he wished to be delivered to the two above-mentioned royal ladies.—Lettre du roi au connétable.—Bibl. Imp. F. Béth. 9054.—Lettres Missives de Henri IV. Xivrey.

brated edict. Several of Mayenne's chief creditors, taking courage from the example of the duchess Diane and queen Louise, presented protests against the enforced postponement of their claims. So great was the ferment in Paris that madame de Montpensier was again compelled to quit the capital; where Cheverny and Villeroy arrived to explain and to tranquillize. Henry, meantime, addressed a still more express mandate to the parliament, insisting on the registration, *pure et simple*, of his edict of amnesty and rehabilitation. In a full sitting of the Chambers it was agreed to register the edict "at the express command of his majesty," on the following conditions:—First, that before M. de Mayenne took his seat again in the Chambers he should make public declaration of his innocence by word of mouth, and acknowledge that the slayers of Henry III. "were execrable traitors, infamous, perfidious, and accursed;" secondly, that the edict should not hereafter be construed into a plenary release from the duke's financial contracts and burdens; and that personally he should remain amenable to his creditors, at the expiration of the year of grace conceded by his majesty; also, that the clause in the act should be erased which falsely stated "that all past actions of M. de Mayenne had been prompted by zeal for the faith."[1] It excited surprise in foreign realms, and throughout the more distant parts of France, that such opposition to Mayenne should be exhibited by the parliament and people of Paris. The greatest hostility, however, during the last days of the Union had been evinced towards the duke, who was accused of treachery and incapacity. The odium incurred by the chief of a fallen faction is universal;

[1] De Thou, liv. 115. L'Estoile—Journal de Henri IV.

in addition to which many personages of the parliament of the Union, incorporated now with the royalist and once banished members, thought by opposition to the edict, to demonstrate their abhorrence of the late rebellion; as also their present freedom from *liaison* with the fallen leaders. The vast sums owing by Mayenne and the princes of Lorraine-Guise greatly increased their unpopularity. All losses and failing speculations were attributed to the duke by the people of Paris. The late obstinate rebellion, and the galling pecuniary engagements which fettered most of the merchants of the capital were ascribed to Mayenne's deceitful persuasions, and to his positive assurances of Spanish co-operation; when it was alleged, that the duke was all along aware that the sole condition on which his catholic majesty consented to aid the rebellion was, the proclamation of Doña Isabel as queen regnant of France.

Henry, meanwhile, refused to permit the interference of the Chambers with the treaty he had accepted and ratified. Letters patent were therefore addressed to the high court, March 20th, in which the king declared that the act of protest presented by queen Louise, and accepted by the Chambers, had no legal influence whatever; and must be regarded only in the light of a dutiful homage offered by the widowed queen to the memory of her late lord and husband, and as such might be deposited in the archives of the parliament. The king, moreover, forbade the erasure of the clause from the edict attributing religious and patriotic motives to the late rebellion of M. de Mayenne; whom the king likewise dispensed from making the declaration proposed by the Chambers. As for the debts contracted by the duke, and his

kindred in behalf of the state, his majesty took upon himself their discharge; and directed that every such creditor should make application to the treasury, when his claim would be examined, and the debt, if valid, discharged. The Chambers thereupon cancelled their conditions, and proceeded to register the decree, "*en les necessités urgentes de l'etat, et par l'ordre exprès de sa majesté.*" Henry, still dissatisfied by this tacit protest, sent a third mandate from the camp of Travercy, dated April 6th,[1] wherein he expressly enjoins the erasure of the obnoxious words entered on the register of the Chambers; as such militated against the perfect pacification of the realm, and left an opening for future troubles. The decree was at length accepted, and reluctantly registered by the parliament, on the intervention of the constable de Montmorency; who went down to La Chambre Dorée, and shortly intimated Henry's determination to efface every hostile *souvenir*. An act of amnesty was likewise signed by the king during his residence at Folembray in favour of the duke de Nemours and his brother, who had offered homage and submission to his majesty.

A report meanwhile prevailed in Paris that another of Henry's rebellious subjects was vanquished

[1] A M. le President de Harlay—"Je vous depêche le S. de Chanvallon pour vous dire que ma volonté est que, toutes difficultés cessantes, ceux de mon parlement aient a proceder incontinent a la dite verification, sans me donner plus la peine de vous écrire. Le rang que vous y tenés me fait esperer que vous y employerés comme je le vous commande; ayant donné charge au dict S. de Chanvallon de ne bouger d'auprès de vous que cela ne soit fait, et de m'advertir de ceux qui s'opposeront; affin que j'y pourveoye, de façon qu'ils cognoissent que je veux être obeye. Adieu M. le premier President. Ce 6 Avril, à Traversy."—Arch. du Royaume, vol. 279.

by the hand of death. The rumour of the demise of Epernon, from injuries received from the explosion of gunpowder at Brignoles and not at first apprehended, gained belief from the fact that the report originated from the *salons* of the hôtel Schomberg. The rumour was soon ascertained to be false: the duke, however, thoroughly weary of his *rôle* of a leader of faction—and disappointed with the result of an interview which he had at Antibes with Don Josef de Cugnia, ambassador of his catholic majesty in Savoye—intimated to Montmorency his desire for reconciliation with the king.[1] Epernon also ascertained that the duke of Savoy, despairing of success in a contest with the king, had made overtures for a truce—a suspension of arms likely to end in peace, should Henry consent to waive his claim to the marquisate of Saluzzo, the original cause of the war.

The works in the camp meanwhile progressed. La Fère was straitly invested; and the project to compel the prompt surrender of the place by turning the course of the river Oise, so as to inundate the town, was steadily prosecuted. The works absorbed immense sums; but his majesty's engineers expressed little confidence in the result, and doubted whether, if accomplished, a sufficient depth of water could be obtained to produce material damage. Henry, however, was sanguine; and M. de Beringhen and his brother, the inventors of the project, positive as to its success. The king contributed liberally from his

[1] "Sur quoi, mon cousin, je vous prie faire cognoitre au duc d'Epernon qu'il me trouvera toujours prêt de le recevoir quand il se rangera a ce qui est de son devoir."—Lettre du roi, au connétable.—Lettres missives, t. 4. F. Bèth. MS. 9075. Giraud—Vie du duc d'Epernon. Lettres du Cardinal d'Ossat, t. 1, lettre 41.

private revenue; while the treasury was drained, despite the warning voice of Rosny. The reason alleged by his majesty for resorting to extraordinary measures for the reduction of La Fère, was the prospect that a speedy capitulation would release the royal army; and enable it to encounter the new viceroy of Flanders on the frontier, and thus repulse the tide of invasion.

The royal correspondence during this interval of Henry's camp life was active. Many letters are extant addressed by the king to the constable de Montmorency, who during Henry's absence made sojourn in Paris; where affairs consequently proceeded in more prosperous manner than during the previous campaign of the king. The sharp, dictatorial manner of the constable repelled insubordination; and madame de Montmorency lived on cordial terms with Gabrielle d'Estrées. Sancy, moreover, was absent on an ambassage to queen Elizabeth, which fact also promoted harmony. Occasionally madame de Monceaux visited the king at Folembray, or at the château de Verneuil; once she even appeared in the camp of Travercy. Amid his anxiety, Henry found leisure to attend to the progress of the buildings he had already commenced at Fontainebleau and St. Germain. A letter is extant in which he writes to the duke de la Force, to send him from the royal gardens at Pau twelve young peach-trees,[1] and to enclose them "in a tin case one foot long, with mould," to plant in his gardens at St. Germain.

[1] "Une douzaine de petits arbres de mylycotons, et aultres pavies de Bearn" (a species of peach), "et les faire mettre dans une boite de fer blanc, qui soit d'un pied de long avec de la terre." Henry's love for fruit was excessive; and the quantity he ate often called forth remonstrance from his physicians.

In Flanders, meantime, the Spaniards were assembling in force, to maintain their conquests of Cambray and Dourlens; and to compel king Henry to raise the siege of La Fère. The military and civil administration of the conde de Fuentes had been the most successful since the days of the great emperor; yet, at this period, Fuentes was recalled, and the vice-regal sceptre transferred to the cardinal archduke, Albert viceroy of Portugal. The rebellion in the United Provinces against Spanish rule had subsisted from the commencement of the reign of Philip II. The malcontents, often worsted, had rallied in superior numbers and more determined hostility. Affairs at this period, though apparently favourable to Spanish supremacy by the conquests and ability of Fuentes, bespoke in reality hopeless alienation between Philip and his revolted provinces. The States-general of Holland, under the able leadership of prince Maurice, steadily demanded free institutions and political and religious liberty. Aided by the arms of the queen of England, and by the alliance of Henry IV., the malcontents maintained their freedom, and harassed the operations of Philip's lieutenants. At the close of a struggle of more than twenty-eight years' duration, which had failed to subdue the courage or the resources of the revolted provinces, Philip II. on his death-bed thought of compromise. Having failed to secure the crown of France for his eldest and favourite child Doña Isabel, Philip resolved to bestow upon the Infanta the precarious heritage of the Low Countries; and at the same time to unite the princess to one of the archdukes, her cousin. Doña Isabel at her birth had been betrothed to the emperor Rodolph, Philip's elder nephew, who was then pursuing his education in Spain. The eccentric

and morose disposition of the emperor, his hatred of women, and his inclination for the study of the occult sciences, had inspired the princess with an unconquerable dread of her imperial betrothed. The once projected union, therefore, had been relinquished during the wars of the League. His catholic majesty frustrated in his designs relative to the French monarchy, and the alliance of his daughter with the duke de Guise, next destined the hand of Doña Isabel for the archduke Ernest. The emperor, meantime, unexpectedly renewed his claim to the preference of the infanta; especially after Philip had signified his resolve to endow his daughter with the goodly heritage of the Netherlands. Philip consented to the suit of his nephew; but declined to invest the future empress with the sovereignty of Flanders. Rodolph thereupon ungallantly withdrew his suit; and forbade his brother and heir-presumptive, the archduke Matthias, to solicit the favour of the infanta. During these negotiations the archduke Ernest died. Rodolph already revelled in the fancied perplexity of the astute Philip, who wished to endow a junior prince of Hapsburg with his rich provinces and sturdy rebels; for the only other marriageable prince of the imperial family was the archduke Albert, the emperor's youngest brother, who, besides being invested with the purple, was metropolitan of Spain and viceroy of Portugal. Prompt, however, were the measures of king Philip—the interests of his dynasty were involved. To bestow the hand of Doña Isabel on the emperor with the Low Countries in dowry, would be to disturb the balance of territory which had hitherto secured the ascendancy of Spanish over imperial interests in Germany: but to marry the

infanta heiress to a prince of a foreign dynasty would be cruelly to despoil the house of Hapsburg of those fair and fertile provinces. Rodolph had not calculated on the influence wielded by Philip at the papal court. The eyes of the archduke Ernest were no sooner closed in death, than the duke of Sessa made suit to Clement VIII. to release the cardinal archduke, archbishop of Toledo, from his vows; and to grant his imperial highness licence to marry. The swift and certain overthrow of the faith in the Low Countries was the calamity set before his holiness as the alternative; for in the confusion consequent on the approaching demise of Philip II., prince Maurice and the recusant States, it was asserted, were sure to absorb the ready alliance of the Belgic provinces. Clement issued his pontifical assent; and the private betrothal of Doña Isabel and her cousin, the archduke primate, followed. Philip then appointed the archduke to the viceroyalty of Flanders; so that his future son-in-law might become acquainted with his subjects, and, if possible, conclude an armistice with prince Maurice, the queen of England, and Henry IV., after the *éclat* of some signal triumph—such as the raising of the siege of La Fère. The cardinal, therefore, anxious to claim his bride, and to merit the papal benediction by the magnitude of his services for the exaltation of the faith, quitted Spain, and set out for Genoa *en route* for Brussels, attended by a magnificent retinue.[1] In his *cortége* were the young prince of Orange,[2] so long

[1] Don Carlos Coloma states that the archduke carried with him a treasure consisting of a million and a half of ducats.

[2] Philip Guillaume, 28 years a prisoner in Madrid. The prince of Orange espoused Eleonore de Bourbon, sister of the prince de Condé. He remained constant in the profession of

a captive at Madrid, and now released at the suit of his future mistress the infanta, the duque de Zargarvalo, Don Juan de Mendoza, and others. At Genoa Albert was received by Antonio Grimaldi, who complimented him in the name of the republic. At Villafranca prince Doria met his highness and escorted him to Turin. From Loano Albert despatched the prince of Orange to Rome, to compliment the pope, and to request permission from his holiness to gird a sword when wearing his ecclesiastical robes; the which the cardinal was not to discard, until actually about to espouse the infanta. Albert also sought leave to retain possession for a period of the enormous revenues of the see of Toledo. The veneration demonstrated for the papacy by the prince of Orange was extremely gratifying to Clement; who formed the happiest auguries relative to the influence likely to be exercised by so catholic a prince. After a brief sojourn in Turin Albert traversed Franche-Comté, and arrived on the 20th of January, 1596, at Luxembourg. From this place the cardinal journeyed to Liège, where he was received by the conde de Fuentes and the chief nobles of Spanish Flanders. Escorted by 1,000 horse the cardinal archduke, in gallant array, entered Brussels by the Porte Louvaine, and took up his abode in the ducal palace. The ceremony of the archduke's recognition as governor-general was performed on the 14th day of February; after which Albert diligently prepared for the war that was to issue in the recognition of his own sovereign authority, conjointly with that of the infanta. The sentiments of the archduke, nevertheless, were eminently pacific: the conclusion of a treaty

the Romish faith, and died at Brussels in 1618, in high favour with the archdukes.

with Henry IV., indeed, was a necessary preliminary of his own sovereignty; while peace with the revolted provinces appeared no less needful to secure his tenure of power. Through the prince of Orange Albert tested the disposition of the Dutch. The members of the States, however, contented themselves with congratulating the prince on his return to his own country: they exhorted him to follow the glorious example of his father; to abjure the Romish faith, and to fight for the liberties of the Netherlands. The prince dutifully communicated this missive to the archduke, who dictated the response; and authorized the prince to propose himself as mediator between the Spanish government and the revolted provinces. The states of Holland declined the overture; and passed a decree warning all, under peril of life and liberty, from negotiating with the Spaniards. The members, moreover, refused to grant a safe-conduct to Orange to visit his relatives of Nassau; adding acrimonious reproach on the religion professed by the prince.[1] The archduke, therefore, resolved to relieve La Fère, now straitly pressed by the royal arms. The first detachment of the Spanish army under the duke d'Arschot crossed the Flemish frontier, and encamped at Catelet on the 30th day of March. The centre of the army, commanded by Albert in person, followed. It consisted of 21,000 men, led by noted officers, amongst whom was M. de Rône, Mayenne's famous lieutenant. A council of war was holden by

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, 116. Bentivoglio. "The States of Holland were so mistrustful of the designs of Orange, whose estates were restored, and who appeared to enjoy the confidence of the government, that they refused him a passport into any of the United Provinces," writes Herrera.

the archduke, when the propositions were put—whether it would be most expedient to attack Henry's camp at Travercy; or to create a diversion by falling upon St. Quentin, Peronne, and Calais? By the advice of Rône it was at length resolved to besiege Calais, a town the fortifications of which had been neglected during the civil war. Albert, therefore, advanced upon St. Omer; while de Rône turned suddenly upon Calais, and laid siege to the fort and bridge of Nieulet, which surrendered almost at the first summons. De Rône then attacked the fort of Risban, which commands the mouth of the harbour. The garrison made more gallant defence; but capitulated on the 9th of April. Rône then despatched an express to the archduke notifying his success, and summoning the latter to appear before Calais, when a general assault would ensure a surrender of the place. The king, meantime, demonstrated energy. He despatched M. de Montluc to intercept the enemy, and to succour Montreuil, a town he believed to be menaced. The states of Holland hastened to send aid to the king; while Montmorency, on the rumour of the march of the Spanish army, repaired to Travercy. On the 13th of April, Henry learned that Calais had been attacked, when his majesty was at the same time apprized of the capture of the forts of Nieulet and Risban. Henry, therefore, left Montmorency before La Fère, and, attended by one regiment and a body of 500 horse, he proceeded to Abbeville. There he received the news of the fall of the faubourg Courguet, and of the march of the archduke to reinforce M. de Rône. The grief of the king was intense;[1] and he writes from St. Valery to

1 "Dieu m'a visité en cette frontière, ayant permis que mes

Montmorency, bitterly commenting on the feeble defence offered by the besieged: "if all my other towns, *mon compère*, act in similar fashion, we shall accomplish nothing!" The object of Albert's sudden foray on Calais was to compel the king, as he hoped, to raise the siege of La Fère. The archduke, though emulous of the fame of Fuentes, yet presumed not to attack the royal camp; and, therefore, had had recourse to indirect operations to accomplish a triumph likely to be especially welcomed by the Spanish ministry. Henry, however, resolved not to move from before La Fère. The garrison of this place was strong and composed of the élite of the Spanish regiments; while the king deemed it a stain on his prowess to tolerate the presence of an enemy in a fortress so far removed from his frontier. The attack on Calais, as the opening-stroke of the campaign, was a stratagem against which mature and crafty tacticians would have protested. Its seizure by the Spaniards aroused the alarm of England; and decided queen Elizabeth to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive between the crowns of England and France—a measure to which her majesty had been long solicited by the king. Already the flotilla under the Earl of Essex destined to make descent on the southern coast of Spain was ready to sail. M. de Sancy arrived in London on the 20th of April, being hastily despatched thither by the king to report his need of succour by land and by sea; and to represent

ennemis ayent gagni des advantages qu'ils n'eussent osé esperer, si je n'en fusse eloigné, ou si mes serviteurs auquels j'avais donné la charge d'icelle m'eussent mieux servi, ou bien eussent été plus heureux."—Lettre du roi a M. de Brèves. Bibl. de M. Monmerqué MS., intitulé, Lettres a l'Ambassadeur du Levant. —Lettres Missives, t. 4.

the audacity of the Spaniards in presuming to establish themselves in a town where their presence was a menace to the English flag. Elizabeth at this juncture could not resist the temptation of again making essay to wrest Calais from the French crown. The queen was at Greenwich when Sancy arrived. The ambassador had full powers to sign an alliance between the crowns. He brought an autograph letter from king Henry to be laid before the council; and a private missive intended for the perusal of the queen, which announced that the duke de Bouillon would be despatched from France in a few days, the bearer of the final proposals of the king. Before giving audience to Sancy, and the very evening, indeed, of his arrival in London, Elizabeth privately despatched Lord Sidney to Boulogne, where Henry was then sojourning, to convey an offer from her majesty to send troops, and the fleet under Essex, to dislodge the archduke from Calais; provided that the town, when evacuated, was ceded to the English. Moreover, the queen engaged to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive; and to aid the king by bountiful loans, and military and naval succours, to drive the Spaniards back over their frontier. The irritation of the king was extreme at this ungenerous importunity on the part of his old ally. The cession of Calais, however, which the king had steadily resisted in his days of emergency, he was not likely now to concede, when his victories had established his crown; and the Spaniards driven back on all points possessed only La Fère, then on the eve of capitulation. The expected demise of Philip II. was likely to produce important modifications; as it was foreseen that Albert and Isabella, in order to consolidate their power over the Low Coun-

tries, must sue for the amity of their potent neighbour the king of France. Henry, therefore, dismissed Elizabeth's ambassador with an absolute refusal to grant the demand of the queen; the king adding—"that he would rather dispense with the aid of Essex and his squadron than purchase it on such terms; for that the Spaniards, even if they established themselves in Calais, would, ere long, be glad to cede their conquest for friendly alliance with France!" Sidney also carried to Elizabeth the following admirable letter from her royal ally:—

Henry IV. to the Queen of England.[1]

"MADAME—I have received your letter delivered by M. de Sidney, and have also listened to the proposals which he was charged by you to make. These demands I deem little seemly; and so contrary to the sincere friendship which I have ever met with from your majesty, that I would fain believe that these propositions have been inspired by those who understand not the promptings of your spirit—rather than credit that such an idea emanated from your own mind—a mind, madame, hitherto so candid and liberal; and which must desire ardently to maintain the integrity and purity of its own matchless friendship. Permit me, madame, therefore, to believe, despite the communication which I have received from M. de Sidney, that you disdain to measure your friendship by the standard of your self-interest and gain; even on this supreme occasion when the urgency of affairs is so great, that no time may be lost in deliberations. A pressing necessity, madame, reveals the amount and sincerity of the nearest and holiest friendship. I persuade myself that your regard, madame, will justify the confidence which I have ever presumed to place in your royal assurances. I deserve such return, madame, for the

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. Brienne MS. 37.

ardour which I feel for your service and glory; the which none can surpass. I pray you, madame, to believe my words; and to accept my acknowledgment that I am what I am, principally owing to your favour—for the which I hold myself to be eternally indebted. I pray you, therefore, that the aid which in my present necessity I have asked at your hands may not be denied me; for such would reflect shame on me, and decrease the cordiality of our alliance—a thing equally to be avoided by both. I have instructed M. de Sancy to explain to you more particularly the bearing of this affair. To him, therefore, I refer your majesty; and humbly kissing the beautiful and fortunate hands which hold the keys of my success, I desire no other prosperity than to be always recognised by you, madame, as

"Your very affectionate brother and servant,

"HENRY."

Elizabeth's covetous desire to possess the sovereignty of Calais was repressed by the perusal of this courteous though firm letter. She perceived that the king would not submit to coercion; or make inglorious surrender of his rights. When the ambassador Sancy was admitted a few hours after the return of Sidney to the royal presence, Elizabeth condescended to make apology for her application: and stated that king Henry had misunderstood her motives and intentions; for that she meant only a proposal to hold Calais with English troops, until his majesty's army was liberated by the capitulation of La Fère. She then referred Sancy to Cecil; who would report the demands and propositions of her dear brother and ally king Henry. Elizabeth, moreover, promised to despatch orders to Essex to land at Boulogne, and there to wait further instructions: but so many delays ensued, that the citadel of Calais

surrendered, and the Spanish flag might be descried from the heights of Dover, before the earl could carry his instructions into effect. "It is better for us, and more expedient, that the king of Spain should have taken Calais, than for us to yield it to you," said Sancy, with frank abruptness, to Burleigh, when conversing on the exploit of the archduke; "we shall soon conquer back our town from the Spaniards; but if we had suffered your occupation we should have been embarrassed to ask for its surrender—you would have taken offence; and thus we should have made two enemies instead of one!" The duke de Bouillon arrived subsequently in London, and was received by Elizabeth with cordial distinction. She immediately nominated commissioners to confer with the French ambassadors, on the expediency of the proposed alliance offensive and defensive. The conferences were holden in the palace of Greenwich. Elizabeth named for her chief commissioners—Lords Burleigh and Cobham. For five days the plenipotentiaries did little else than dispute—the hot tempers and arrogant tongues of Bouillon and Sancy being provoked to more than usual acrimony by the penurious propositions of lord-treasurer Burleigh. The latter unreasonably reproached Henry's deputies with their master's abjuration of the reformed faith. Bouillon retorted by sharp comments on the queen's insincerity; who after all her professions had yet permitted the archduke to capture Calais, while Essex and his fleet were lying at anchor in the channel. Elizabeth also demonstrated jealousy at the succour granted to king Henry by the United Provinces; her majesty sharply observing, "that the Dutch ought not to make presents if they could not pay their debts." The queen thereupon despatched

Sir Thomas Badly to demand payment of the loans she had advanced to the States. These vexatious broils so irritated the ambassadors, that they resolved to quit the realm; as the queen and her ministers seemed averse to the conclusion of the league, which they had visited London to negotiate. A long wrangle then commenced as to the person who had first mooted the project of the league: Bouillon insisting that it was Unton, the English envoy; while Burleigh declared that the proposal originated with the French ministry. The ambassadors had prepared their equipage for departure, when they were summoned into the queen's presence, and to their astonishment Elizabeth informed them "that the peril of the two crowns was imminent—the Spaniard meditating a descent upon England or Ireland:—that she had nothing more at heart than to conclude the alliance with her dear brother; and had ordered her ministers to draw up the treaty in conjunction with themselves."[1] The treaty was subsequently concluded on conditions far more advantageous to Elizabeth than to Henry IV.: for the queen, despite her *penchant* for the king, generally contrived to improve to her own advantage any interval of comparative adversity. The loss of Cambray, Dourlens, Calais, and Ardres, which latter place had been besieged by de Rône, and wantonly surrendered by M. de Belin, created a panic which the alliance with England alone could allay. The Spanish cabinet, moreover, caused it to be bruited that Philip had resolved to offer Calais to queen Elizabeth in exchange for Flushing; and to send ambassadors to negotiate a peace with the revolted provinces, in order that, previous to his demise, his catholic majesty

[1] De Thou. Cayet. Hume.

might witness the pacification of the heritage he had bestowed on Doña Isabel. All these alarming rumours rendered the French council eager for the alliance of Elizabeth. The States-general of Holland were included in the treaty at the request of Henry IV., and were named, "The United Provinces under the protection of her Britannic majesty." Henry and Elizabeth mutually agreed not to conclude a separate peace with Spain. The queen promised to furnish a contingent of 4,000 men for the defence of Picardy and Normandy; her majesty, moreover, advancing the sum requisite for their pay during the first six months of the campaign. Henry likewise engaged to furnish the queen with troops, in case England was invaded — he also covenanted to protect the English residents in France from religious persecution. The treaty authorized the king to enlist an additional body of 4,000 men in England: the queen also agreed, on the termination of the war in Ireland, to send still more potent succours for the service of her brother and ally king Henry. Elizabeth signed this compact on the 27th of May, 1596. The States of Holland accepted the league, and succeeded in pacifying the anger of their potent protectress by paying a yearly subsidy of 200,000 florins; and by furnishing the queen with 24 ships well manned to join the fleet ready to sail under the command of Essex.

The treaty was ratified by Henri Quatre at Melun, on the 29th of August, 1596.

CHAPTER IV.

1596.

Broils of the Council of State—Penury of the king—He summons M. de Rosny to conference at Amiens—Journey of Rosny thither with Gabrielle d'Estrées—Mission of M. de Rosny to the duke de Montpensier—He repairs to Fontainebleau—Stormy interview with Madame—Correspondence with the king—Capitulation of La Fère—The conditions—The duke d'Epernon and the war in Provence—He submits to the royal authority—Pestilence in Paris—Demise of the duchess de Montpensier—The duke de Mayenne visits the king at Monceaux—Gabrielle d'Estrées—Arrival of the legate cardinal de Medici—Honours conferred upon him—Is met by the king at Chanteloup—His entry into Paris—Financial difficulties of the realm—M. de Rosny consulted thereon—Introduction of Rosny into the council—His mission to the Generalités—Henry visits the château de Gaillon—Admits to audience an envoy from Savoy—Assembly of Notables in Rouen—Queen Elizabeth sends the earl of Shrewsbury to invest the king with the Order of the Garter—Rosny is recalled from his mission—Feuds between MM. de Rosny and de Sancy—Opening of the assembly of Notables—Speech of Henri Quatre—Enthusiasm displayed—Birth of Henriette Catherine de Vendôme—Baptismal ceremonies—Betrothal of the young princess to the heir of Montmorency—Deliberations of the Notables—Le Conseil de Raison—

Debates on the subject in council—Advice of M. de Rosny —Decree in favour of the princess de Condé—She renounces the reformed faith—Festivities at Rouen—Menaced rupture between the courts of England and France—Jealousy of Queen Elizabeth—Mission of MM. d'Ancel and de Bongars to the German courts—Foreign policy of Henri Quatre—Continued debates of the assembly at Rouen—The Notables present to the king the reports of the three Orders—Reply of Henri IV.

M. DE ROSNY during these transactions remained at his château of Muret; where the broils of the ministers during the Burgundian campaign had compelled him to take refuge. The mission of Sancy to the English court was in the first instance offered to Rosny. The latter aware that the object of the ministers in recommending his nomination, was to remove him from their sphere, and to overthrow his influence, in case the alliance with France should be declined by Elizabeth, steadily prayed the king to excuse his acceptance of an ambassage for which neither his rank nor his fortune was then commensurate. Gabrielle d'Estrées, ever the firm friend of Rosny, supported his refusal; and at length retaliated on his enemies by procuring the appointment of Sancy, whom she hated—a decision which left the office of finance minister to be provisionally supplied by his colleagues of the council. The confusion which ensued more than fulfilled the designs of La Marquise. The king, furious at the disorder in his exchequer, and at the misappropriation of treasure which occasioned mutinies in his army—as no money was forthcoming for the pay of the troops—railed at his inefficient ministers. The period was critical: the town of La Fère had made overtures of capitulation—money was wanted to bribe adherents, and to

maintain the *prestige* of the crown. Large sums, it was true, had been lavished by Henry in his attempt to inundate the town of La Fère. This project had proved a failure. The water, when the embankment was completed, instead of rising 18 feet as was contemplated, scarcely spread over the country to the depth of one foot. The besieged drove their cattle from the lower part of the town, which was alone inundated; and jeered at the incapacity of the royal engineers. The capitulation of Ardres was attributed by M. de Belin to want of ammunition and provision; this assertion, however, was subsequently disproved. An attempt made by the king to surprise Arras had failed from the same cause. Meantime, whilst the negotiation for the surrender of La Fère languished, the archduke having inaugurated his assumption of the vice-regal sceptre by the capture of Calais and Ardres, was making rapid retreat to the Flemish frontier, to avoid an encounter with the royal army; dreading, like his predecessors, to measure strength in a pitched battle with Henri Quatre. To these annoyances others daily gathered. The privy purse was exhausted; for the sums lavished on the household of Madame de Monceaux, and the cost of the king's buildings, proved a heavy tax, at this period, on the royal resources. The king, therefore, resolved to summon Rosny to Amiens, to adjust pecuniary affairs; and to avail himself of the trusty counsel of the latter on several important matters then pending. About the middle of April, therefore, Henry directed him to set out and escort Madame Gabrielle to Amiens, whom his majesty had not seen since he bade her farewell at Folembray. The royal letter details Henry's grievances; and states his resolve to concentrate the various offices of the go-

vernment in the hands of a few able, trustworthy, and faithful ministers. The king recounts how he had applied to the treasury for a sum of 800,000 crowns, which was urgently required for the success of his military operations; "the reply I received, after much delay, was excuse, and reasons which contradicted each other; finally, I was told it was impossible to raise such a sum; and that it was as much as could be done to find funds to defray the cost of my household. I desire, therefore," continues his majesty, "that you advise with me freely and fully; and that you may judge how needful such counsels are to me, I avow to you my present condition in the presence of the enemy. I have not a charger that I could ride in battle; my armour is incomplete; my shirts are ragged; my doublets out at elbows; my camp kitchen is worn out, so that every two days I am obliged to dine with my officers. Judge, therefore, *mon ami*, how I am treated! Is it just that I should starve whilst my ministers and treasurers keep dainty tables? or that my household should be poor, while their house is opulent?"[1] No person sympathized with the king on the extravagancies and peculations of his officers more than M. de Rosny: from the day of Henry's accession the waste of the royal finances had been Rosny's *bête noire*—the incubus which harassed his repose. Rosny relates that this letter arrived accompanied by one written by Madame de Monceaux, as he was superintending the digging of the lake in the grounds of his château de Muret. Rosny burned his majesty's letter after perusal as the king desired; he displayed it at

[1] Bibl. Imp. MS. Suppl. Fr. 1009. Economies Royales, t. 1, in fol. Amsterdam.

length, however, to two of his secretaries. "See!" said he, "his majesty cannot be taunted with idleness, when he writes with his own hand such a letter as this!" The fact that Rosny burned the letter immediately, led several contemporary historians to question the correctness of the text which the former gives in his Memoirs. Marbaut, secretary to Duplessis-Mornay, asserts that Henry's necessities, though they were great, are exaggerated; and that the strong language which his majesty is made to use are terms invented by Rosny, who could not be expected to remember the exact words written by the king, when many years subsequently he recorded this letter in his celebrated Memoirs. The letter written by Madame de Monceaux appointed the abbey of Maubuisson as the place she would give Rosny rendezvous. The demise of the duke de Nevers rendered the prospect of a sojourn at court more tolerable to Rosny: nevertheless, had he divined what was to be the first service exacted from his devotion, he might still have sought excuse to linger at Muret. Gabrielle d'Estrées repaired to Maubuisson to visit her sister the abbess Angelique, who had again brought discredit on her community by her *liaison* with M. de Roquelaure—a witty cavalier of the court favoured by the king, who often availed himself of Roquelaure's happy facility of speech, when he wished to convey disagreeable mandates to any of his courtiers. Rosny found Gabrielle anxiously expecting his arrival. Madame de Monceaux travelled in a litter, borne by mules; her women occupied a coach drawn by four horses. There was also a train of six sumpter mules laden with coffers containing the wardrobe of La Marquise. M. de Rosny and his gentlemen preceded the litter;

and nothing occurred to interrupt the harmony of the progress until within a league of Clermont. The road then became steep and rugged; the path for some distance wound over the hill, having on one side a rocky eminence, on the other a precipitous descent over crags and brushwood down to a valley, in which stood a small hamlet. On this dangerous pass the driver of the coach containing the ladies drew up his horses, and left the vehicle on the edge of the descent, while he went back to seek for an iron pin which had fallen from the wheel of the coach. One of the mules during his absence galloped suddenly past the coach neighing loudly, which startled the horses; they therefore dashed onwards. The litter of Madame de Monceaux was in sight, and the road so narrow, that two vehicles only with the greatest care could pass abreast without risk of overthrow into the valley beneath. The ladies in the coach began to scream; and alarmed at the clamour Madame de Monceaux opened the curtain of her litter, and beheld the peril which menaced her. Inevitable destruction seemed to await the litter, either from being pitched over the precipice, or crushed in the collision with the ponderous vehicle. The cries of Madame de Monceaux were heard by Rosny; and first apprized him of her danger.[1] "By one of those strokes of fortune which may properly be termed miraculous, as the coach was almost upon the litter of the Marquise, the pins of the fore-wheels broke, and the coach fell, dragging one of the horses to the ground. The leaders broke the traces and galloped forwards,

[1] "Ah, mon ami," exclaimed Rosny to M. Lefort, "que ferons nous? voilà notre femme qui va être mise en pièces: que deviendrons nous? et que dira le roi?"—Mém. Livre 8ème.

striking the litter, which was pushed close to the edge of the precipice." M. de Rosny continues to relate how he stopped the horses and proceeded to reassure Madame de Monceaux, who was reclining on her cushions half dead with terror. Rosny also went to the rescue of the affrighted damsels in the coach; and was complaisant enough to bastinado their driver. The litter of Madame de Monceaux then proceeded, as the king was to meet his mistress at Clermont; the coach was delayed for many hours while the necessary repairs were made with the aid of peasants from the hamlet at the foot of the hill. Gabrielle, as soon as she beheld the king, related the accident. "His majesty," recounts M. de Rosny, "shuddered and grew pale, so that it was easy for me to perceive the extent of his mad passion for this woman."[1]

The first mission confided to M. de Rosny was a journey to Rouen to confer with the duke de Montpensier. The king had received private intimation that Montpensier secretly nourished resentment for the summary rejection of a proposal he had made to the privy-council, to render the governments of provinces hereditary in the houses of the present holders of the dignity; also, because Henry did not compel Madame to reward the duke's past eminent services, by the gift of her hand. The duke, however, completely reassured Rosny; and proved that his loyal attachment to Henri Quatre had suffered no diminution. "I ardently desire the favour of Madame," said Montpensier, "but I distrust my power, ever to vanquish her repugnance; or to efface the influence of M. de Soissons."[2] Rosny, therefore, returned to

[1] Livre 8ème.
[2] Ibid.

his royal master with satisfactory intelligence respecting the duke's sentiments. Henry evinced great attachment for Montpensier; and favoured him more than any other of the princes of the blood. The king, consequently, resolved to hazard another attempt to subdue the resolute will of Madame; and to make the princess comprehend how impossible it was that she could espouse Soissons, after his desertion from the camp in Burgundy; and his attempt to dictate in the matter of the recognition of the claims of the young prince de Condé. From the duke de Bellegarde Henry likewise received private information that M. de Guise had written to Madame expressing his homage and admiration; and was about to apply for the royal sanction openly to make suit for her hand.[1] A quarrel had ensued between Bellegarde and the duke de Guise; for the latter resented the duke's assiduities to his sister, mademoiselle de Guise, whose levity was creating disreputable comment in Paris.[2] The betrayal of the project of the duke de Guise relative to Madame ensued; a secret which Bellegarde probably ascertained from mademoiselle de Guise during the frequent interviews with which, despite the duke's recent marriage, the latter honoured him. For this disagreeable mission to Fontainebleau, where Madame was sojourning, Henry selected Rosny. In vain the latter, who ever seems to be inspired with perfect dread of Madame's passionate

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1596.

[2] Mademoiselle de Guise one day entreated her brother to give up gambling. "Ma sœur," replied the young prince, "je ne jouerai plus quand vous ne ferez plus l'amour." "Ah! le mechant," observed Louise de Lorraine, "il ne s'en abstiendra jamais!"

temper, implored to be excused. He represented that the princess, who had never forgiven the *ruse* which he employed at Chartres by command of his majesty, to gain possession of the promise of marriage exchanged with M. de Soissons, would probably refuse to listen to his arguments; even if her highness admitted him to her presence. He had ascertained also, that the correspondence between M. de Soissons and the princess was more frequent than ever; and, therefore, it would be an insult to Madame to intrude into her presence, and propose an alliance which she had peremptorily declined, even when solicited by his majesty! Henry, however, persisted — "Rosny! à bon maître, hardi valet! partez!" said his majesty. Thus constrained Rosny was compelled to obey. He stipulated, however, that Henry should despatch the under-secretary of state Lomenie to Fontainebleau officially to apprize Madame of his intended visit, on a mission from the king. Henry also gave Rosny a letter which he was to use only in case of necessity, containing an authorization to propose again the alliance with M. de Montpensier; a measure which the epistle stated was deprecated by Rosny out of respect for Madame, but resumed on the express notification of his royal will. Thus fortified Rosny reluctantly departed for Fontainebleau, spending one day in Paris, *en route*. Madame gave him courteous reception; and displayed intense curiosity to learn the object of his errand. The princess was attended by Mesdames de Guiche, de Pangeas, de la Barre, and by the duchess de Rohan. Rosny spent two days in taking pleasant excursions with the ladies; and in rendering himself agreeable to Madame by assiduous attentions. The princess, however, soon assumed an

attitude half courteous, half resentful.[1] Rosny's delay in unfolding his mission convinced Madame, who knew him well, that some unpleasant intimation from her brother awaited her ear. On the third day Rosny had private conference with Madame in the Galerie de Diane. He commenced an oration on the count de Soissons, ascribing much merit to the prince; but deploring the unfortunate circumstance that he was disliked by the king; and after his recent conduct ought to aspire no longer to the hand of the august sister of his sovereign. When Rosny paused, Madame launched forth a torrent of reproach, "using epithets of the strongest description; with menaces of speedily making me lose the favour of the king." Rosny responded by a remonstrance on the obstinacy of the princess; and on the unworthy conduct of M. de Soissons, who, having been once master of his destiny, had forfeited the royal favour by his petulance and caprices. "I saw," writes Rosny, "whirls of passion on the countenance of the princess, whose face became red and then pale. I deemed it, however, to be the wiser course, to put one lover *hors de combat* before introducing another." The fury of Madame, however, flamed forth: "You betray me, M. de Rosny," said she; "and as for the king he loves me so well that he cannot part from me; witness his repeated opposition to my marriage!" Madame then enumerated the proposals of marriage she had received; all of which, she said, had been purposely

[1] Madame se flattoit (car en amour si l'on craint tout, on se flatte aussi de tout) que peut-être je venais rendre le comte de Soissons heureux; et cette pensée me rendit heureux moi-même tant qu'elle dura, c'est à dire les deux premiers jours, que je crus devoir donner à la civilité et aux compliments.—Mém de Sully, liv. 8ème.

thwarted by her brother. She stated that the shameful conduct of the king towards M. de Soissons had provoked retaliation. "You intimate, however, Monsieur, that the unhappy past may be effaced from the mind of the king; say, how can M. de Soissons remove the adverse sentiments of his majesty?" "By demeaning himself, Madame, quite the contrary to what he has done!" Rosny had never yet mentioned the name of Montpensier; or that of any other aspirant for her hand. As the princess seemed pensive after this last remark, Henry's envoy deemed it best to terminate the discourse for that day. Rosny, therefore, began to converse on the gracious kindness of the king; and on his majesty's late triumphs. Madame listened composedly; and then drily asked, "if a depreciation of the conduct of M. de Soissons was all M. de Rosny was sent to impart?" Madame then observed that it was growing dark; and abruptly dismissed Rosny. As the latter made obeisance and retired, he heard the princess mutter allusions to the deceit at Chartres; and her resolve *coûte que coûte* to keep faith with M. de Soissons—indications ominous for the interview of the morrow, as Rosny deemed. The following afternoon Rosny presented himself in the ante-chamber of Madame's apartment; in which, as soon as dinner was over, she had shut herself up to take counsel with mesdames de Guiche and de Rohan. Rosny remained in conversation with other ladies for some interval; the door of the cabinet was then opened, and Madame appeared, attended by her two principal ladies. The princess was much dressed, and looked haughty and defiant. Rosny followed to La Grande Galerie, where the court often assembled. Madame signed to him to ap-

proach. She then commenced an angry *tirade*, telling Rosny publicly "that she dispensed with further communications; but that she required him to listen to what she had to impart." According to Rosny's account, a more vituperative harangue had seldom before issued from the lips of a princess. She called M. de Pangeas, who had executed the orders of his majesty in preventing the clandestine marriage contemplated between herself and Soissons in the spring of the year 1593, in the presence of his wife, a "burly blockhead, who had still to reap the reward of his demerits." "As for you, M. de Rosny, if you are audacious enough to meddle with my affairs, I warn you, beware! What have you in common with a personage of my dignity? You are only a paltry gentleman, whose distinction is to have been nurtured in our royal house; and whose forefathers derived subsistence alone from paying court to the princes of Navarre, my ancestors! The fate of such as you, Monsieur, let me tell you, who presume to thrust the finger between the tree and its bark is sooner or later to be dismissed with ignominy."[1] Madame continued her objurgations until breath failed her. Rosny replied firmly and respectfully. He excused his mission on the express mandate of the king. He next produced Henry's credential letter, which he showed to Madame, though he did not present the document. Madame glanced uneasily at her *confidente*, madame de Guiche.

[1] "Elle me dit que je n'etais en effet, au lieu d'être homme d'importance et habile politique, qu'un vil et lâche flatteur; qui ne cherchoit qu'à arracher de sa bouche l'aveu des fautes que le comte et elle n'avaient point commises, pour en faire ma cour au roi, indigné lui même du personnage que je jouais."—Mém. de Sully, liv. 8ème.

"Madame, I have to declare to you that the king being your brother and sovereign you have no resource but to submit to his will. It is your duty to accept the husband chosen for you; and to despise the evil counsel of M. de Soissons—indeed, Madame, you have this alternative or disgrace. How will your highness descend from the position of queen which you occupy at this court, to the mediocre condition which must be yours when the large revenue, conferred by the honour and affection which the king bears you, is withdrawn?" This language excited another violent retort from Madame; who then withdrew, protesting that she would despatch an express to king Henry to complain of the insolent threats addressed to her by Rosny. The latter departed irritated and anxious: he knew the hasty temper of the king; and the affection which Henry bore his sister despite their frequent quarrels. As he descended the grand staircase madame de Neuvy, one of Madame's women, followed, and asked for his majesty's letter in the name of the princess. Rosny courteously declined to comply: thinking it more prudent, as the name of Montpensier had not been mentioned, to inform the king of the tempest in Madame's temper evoked by the apprehension even of a project to separate her from "*son cher comte.*" On his arrival at his own adjacent castle of Muret, Rosny wrote to the king; and then set out for Amiens, aware that Madame had already despatched there Boësse, her *maître d'hôtel.* Boësse made such extraordinary expedition that he returned from Amiens before the courier of Rosny, who met with an accident *en route*, had even presented his missive. The king answered his sister's letter; and also wrote to Rosny an epistle which his majesty sent open. Incensed by Madame's

relation of the outrage she had experienced, Henry, forgetting that he had forced the disagreeable mission on Rosny, wrote hastily, and in anger. The mortification of the king's zealous servant was complete when Rosny perceived that Madame in triumph had perused and affixed her private seal to the royal missive. "M. de Rosny," wrote his majesty, "I have received letters from my sister, in the which she makes marvellous complaint of you, saying that you have offended her to such a degree that she can never pardon you, and prays that I will do her justice. It is true that in her letter she specifies nothing; which makes me believe that perhaps the harm done her is not so perceptible as her clamour; but she states that you employed so many insolencies in your discourse with her that even I myself could not so have addressed her. You must be aware that such conduct is not excusable, nor according to the command and instructions which I gave you on your departure. I desired you to address Madame with the same honour and respect as you would pay to myself. Therefore reflect upon what you have said, and if you recall the slightest word which can offend, return to Madame and ask her pardon, which she will instantly accord, as I have provided. Nevertheless, make her every satisfaction; for I cannot suffer—Madame being what she is—that any of my subjects should offend her without chastisement, should he refuse to make requisite submission."[1] This letter was deeply galling to Rosny's self-respect — resentment at his royal master, who had involved him in an angry conflict, and then abandoned him on an unjust appeal, was at first dominant. After much reflection, Rosny resolved not to return to Fontainebleau, to be

[1] Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. 1009.—Economies Royales, t. 1.

there made the victim of Madame's haughty condescension, and the jest of her ladies; yet not absolutely to disobey the royal mandate, he determined to feign illness. He relied on Henry's sense of justice and generosity; and, at any rate, thought it better to wait until the return of his own courier. "I resolved," says Rosny, "having in nothing violated my duty, not to throw the handle after the hatchet; but to wait and peruse the final commands of his majesty, so as not, by precipitation, to lose the pecuniary rewards and honour of my long devotion just when fortune was beginning to favour me."[1] Rosny had not long to muse in sorrow and doubt; the next day brought the following welcome missive from the king:—

Henry IV. to M. de Rosny.[2]

"Mon Ami—I doubt not that this letter finds you in a furious passion against me for the style and contents of my last missive which Boësse delivered to you. I wrote that letter to satisfy the importunities of my sister, and to assuage the waves of her wrath. You know her as well as myself; we are both passionate and fractious, but we soon recover therefrom. Take no notice, therefore, of that letter; but trust to this one, by which I send fresh confirmation of the assurances I gave at your departure hence. I am convinced that you have done nothing which I cannot approve; also that you have not sacrificed the letter of instruction which I gave you. Fear not, therefore, that I intend to disavow your proceedings, or that I will suffer any annoyance to befall you: serve me after my own fashion—love me, as I regard you. Join me here, so that I may learn every incident of your mission

[1] Ibid.—"Je fus terrassé, de ce coup accablant."

[2] Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. 1009.—Ibid.—Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 5.

more fully than I have done from your envoy, who dislocated his foot, as he told me, in riding fast to deliver your letter. You will be as well received by me as ever, even were I to act on the old Bourbon motto, '*Qui qu'en grogne.*'[1] A Dieu, mon ami. From Amiens, this 17th day of May, 1596."

"In this cordial and welcome epistle I recognized my old master," says Rosny, in transport. By dawn the following morning Rosny was on his road to Amiens; where he was affectionately welcomed by the king and Gabrielle d'Estrées. Madame's elation was repressed when, instead of beholding the arrival of Rosny at Fontainebleau, humbly to solicit her pardon, she received information from M. la Varanne, recounting the reception experienced by the former; and that the rumour was prevalent that king Henry was about to commit the management of his finances to M. de Rosny. The princess, on reflection, avowed that she had been hasty; and that Rosny's offence was chiefly what she supposed he wished to insinuate, rather than what he had expressed. Rosny's cautious periods irritated Madame, especially when he opened the parley by an attack upon M. de Soissons, apparently so unauthorized and needless. The intelligence of Rosny's intended promotion inspired Madame with serious thought. By her brother's counsel, she therefore

[1] "Qui qu'en grogne, tel est mon plaisir!" Henri Quatre here makes rather inaccurate allusion. The motto in question appertained to the princes of Dreux, dukes of Bretagne. It may still be faintly traced, cut into the wall of the castle of St. Malo, built by queen Anne de Bretagne. Anne was asked before her marriage upon what model she chose to have the castle constructed. "Like my coach!" replied the duchess. In vindication of this whim, Anne caused the inscription—the motto of one of her ancestors—to be affixed on the edifice.

sought some method for soothing Rosny's self-esteem, so keenly wounded during their late conference. Madame de Rosny, when resident at Muret, attended *le prêche*, which was celebrated every Sunday at Fontainebleau. For several Sundays the former retired at the conclusion of the service, without repairing to Madame's saloon of audience, as used to be her custom. The princess therefore desired madame de Pangeas to notify to madame de Rosny that it was her desire to receive her as usual. Madame de Rosny replied, "that the terms upon which Madame was with her husband forbade her the honour." When madame de Rosny next appeared at *le prêche*, the princess sent her word, "that the reason she had alleged for not visiting her was insufficient, and that she would be glad to see her. A gracious reception awaited madame de Rosny, and the affair was suffered to pass without further notice —Madame receiving Rosny, on her return to Paris, as if nothing had occurred.[1] He, however, preserved a vivid recollection of Madame's vigour of diction; and subsequently declined to be the bearer of any of his majesty's notifications or wishes.

La Fère surrendered on the 22nd day of May. The negotiations had long been pending; and it was suspected that Colas, sénechal of Montélimar, and Don Alvaro Osorio, commandants, had purposely caused the delay, to give the archduke leisure to garrison the towns he had captured, and to retreat to the frontier before the release of the royal army. The haughtiness of this Osorio was unequalled. He refused to allow the term "surrender" to be used in the articles of capitulation, such word savouring, as he said, of cowardice. The garrison marched out of

[1] Mém. de Sully.—liv. 8ème.

La Fère with the honours of war; it having been first stipulated that the men should be escorted to any town the imperial viceroy designated. Don Alvaro was also to carry away a cannon adorned with the arms of Spain; and all that Colas had granted to the townsmen in his quality of count de la Fère, the king engaged to ratify. Finally, the Spaniards promised to salute the flag of France when leaving the town; but declined to confirm the concession by signature. The Spanish garrison was escorted to Cambray,[1] The king gave the government of La Fère to M. de Manican, a relative of madame de Monceaux. Henry then bade farewell to Gabrielle d'Estrées, and, breaking up his camp at Travercy, proceeded to Abbeville, to watch the movements of the Spanish viceroy; and to introduce order in his finances by the aid of Rosny and Bellièvre. The news of the submission of Marseilles to the duke de Guise, and of the rapid pacification of Provence on the departure thence of Epernon, gave the king solace. "My enemy," wrote Henry at this period to M. de Brêves, "has entered the kingdom, perceiving that I was occupied with the great siege of La Fère (which town I have at length recovered), and seized my two towns of Calais and Ardres—a capture facilitated by their bad condition. This capture has given the enemy great elation, which, by the help of God, I will speedily quench. The enemy would not have presumed to attack these said towns if I and my army had not been engaged before La Fère. I have now liberty of action, and have encamped my army on Spanish territory; but the enemy has not dared to show himself. I have,

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps.

moreover, concluded a league offensive and defensive with the queen of England."[1]

The king also wrote to the pope, in reply to the official intimation made of the appointment of cardinal de Medici as legate; and to acknowledge the arrival of the pontifical bull of absolution brought by M. d'Elbêne. This appointment to the French legation had been coveted by the members of the Sacred College. The pontifical choice had first fallen upon the cardinal Toleto—a prelate eminent for command of temper and moderation; and who had powerfully served French interests. Toleto himself desired the mission, as he entertained great admiration for Henry IV. On reflection, however, the pope descried two obstacles to the proposed nomination—Toleto was a Jesuit, and after the expulsion of that Order from France, the appointment of a chief member of the Society might have received a hostile construction. Toleto, again, was old, and incapable of mental fatigue; and the pope intended, through his legate, to attempt to reconcile the crowns of France and Spain, and therefore to commence immediate overtures of negotiation. Clement shrewdly perceived that the juncture was favourable for the interposition of the Holy See. Philip II. was dying; and application had been made to Rome to cancel the priestly vows of the archduke Albert, and to grant dispensation for his marriage with the Infanta—a measure upon which depended the preservation of the Belgic provinces to the house of Hapsburg. M. de Mercœur likewise solicited the *bienveillance* of the holy father. Several large sees in Bretagne had fallen, the revenues of which had been appropriated by Mercœur. The dioceses, however, deprived of spiritual

[1] Lettres Missives, t. 4. Bibl. de M. de Monmerqué.

supervision, became the haunts of all manner of fanatics, who were controlled neither by secular nor ecclesiastical authority. The duke, therefore, had made application to his holiness to grant briefs of induction to certain churchmen nominated by himself to the vacant benefices.

When apprized that the offices of nuncio and plenipotentiary were to be combined, cardinal Toleto reluctantly confessed that a mission so arduous was beyond his present powers. The communication addressed to the pope by Henry from Abbeville being deemed amply satisfactory, the cardinal Alexandro de Medici[1] therefore made preparation for departure.

The king also wrote from Abbeville to M. d'Epernon, whose tardy submission Henry magnanimously accepted with an alacrity little merited by its object. The towns of Marseilles and Sisteron having returned to their allegiance, the duke had no resource but obedience, or open alliance with the foes of France. His conduct at this period was marked by that pride and insincerity which ever signalized Epernon. He accredited three envoys: one to carry his alleged submission to Henry, one to the duke of Savoy, and a third to Velasco, at Milan. The duke subsequently thus explained these suspicious proceedings: his message to the

[1] Cardinal Alexandro de Medici was distantly allied to the grand duke of Florence. He descended from Jovenco, the youngest son of the Gonfaloniere Averardo (1314). The reigning branch of the Medici descended from Chiarissimo, eldest son of Averardo. Alexandro was seventh in descent from Cosmo, "Father of the Medici." The eldest brother of the cardinal, Bernadetto, bore the title of Principe d'Ottajano. Cardinal de Medici was elevated to the pontifical throne in 1605, and took the name of Leone XI.

duke of Savoy, he said, was one of farewell and sympathy for so noble a prince; and his envoy to Milan was commissioned to draw from the bank of Milan the sum of 60,000 crowns, which, Epernon said, he had there deposited. "The fine Frenchman, to have placed his money in the bank of a Spanish town!" exclaims d'Ossat. "M. d'Epernon has the repute of having assurance enough to extort his own conditions from the king—only beware of his guile." Epernon, however, did not extort any conditions whatever; Gabrielle d'Estrées disliked and avoided him. The duke also was now puffed up with the hope of obtaining the hand of Madame; though it was difficult to trace the foundation of such expectation. He therefore simply accepted permission to return to court, with letters patent guaranteeing him from the consequences of his late *tracasseries* in Provence.[1]

On the last day of June the king returned to Amiens, and from thence joined Gabrielle d'Estrées and her son, at the castle of Monceaux, once the private abode of Catherine de Medici. The king avoided the capital, as Paris was ravaged by the plague. The unfortunate city seemed doomed to drain the cup of calamity. Famine, pestilence, and tumult raged in turn its fearful scourge. "Many of the most opulent houses were infected," writes a contemporary and inhabitant of Paris. "In the parishes of St. Nicholas, Montmartre, the Faubourgs St. Honoré and St. Martin, the haunts of the most indigent, the malady was less virulent. The Faubourg St. Germain was especially stricken, and the hospitals were filled with patients from this locality." Six hundred people died during the month of April of the prevailing malady in the

[1] Girard—Vie du duc d'Epernon. De Thou.

Hôtel-Dieu. Many persons of distinguished rank fell victims; amongst others was the young abbess of St. Antoine des Champs. In May the plague carried off an illustrious victim. Madame de Montpensier was seized with the fatal fever, and died after two days of suffering. All kinds of fabulous stories were circulated on the demise of the duchess. Some averred that she expired shrieking forth blasphemies, and making fearful recital of her crimes; others, that blood welled from the pores of her body, attended by mysterious symptoms, which proclaimed that Divine justice had decreed that the demise of so notorious a sinner should be attended by supernatural portents. A storm raged during the last hours of madame de Montpensier's life; and the sounds of the tempest are said to have increased the wild delirium of the sufferer.[1] Madame de Montpensier was mourned by no one; the members of her family were ashamed of her past excesses, and deprecated the imprudent violence of her daily conduct, which they feared might eventually involve them with the king. On the surrender of Paris, madame de Montpensier, whose fortune was impaired, retired to a small house in the Rue des Bourdonnois, where she lived a comparatively solitary life, disowned by the duke de Montpensier, her late husband's grandson; and neglected by her nearest kindred, each of whom was absorbed in re-establishing his fortune. The personage who showed madame de Montpensier most civility was Madame. The princess seemed to take singular pleasure in the bold, speculative flights and hardy sarcasm hazarded by the duchess, which faculty her misfortunes had not enfeebled. Catherine

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Ste. Marthe Hist. de la Royale Maison de France.

de Medici in like manner patronized the duchess, and admitted her to the private *réunions* at the hôtel de Soissons, from genuine admiration of her varied gifts, and not in homage to the rising star of her brother Guise—the talisman which alone caused the society of madame de Montpensier to be tolerated by the ladies of the court of Henry III. The duchess was hastily interred in the church of the nunnery of the Filles Dieu Rue St. Denis.[1] These nuns were a colony from Fontevrault; and their house, founded by St. Louis, possessed the privilege of presenting a cup of wine and a last morsel of bread to criminals on their road to the gibbet of Montfaucon. The wits of Paris therefore declared, that no spot more appropriate than the chapel of Les Filles Dieu could have been selected for the interment of Catherine de Lorraine.

At Monceaux important events were meantime occurring. King Henry there received the personal submission of Mayenne, late chief of the Holy Union. The indisposition of the duke—who suffered from sciatica, and maladies resulting from his corpulence of person—had prevented him from repairing to Folembray. It had there been proposed that Mayenne should join the camp before La Fère; but with that generous consideration ever evinced by Henry, the painful test of bearing arms against his late ally was spared the duke. Gabrielle d'Estrées, who had taken so active a share in the previous negotiations, then proposed that the interview should take place in her château of Monceaux. The duke was on terms of intimacy with Gabrielle; whose interests he had promised to promote. The amenity of manner and dignity of Madame de Monceaux won

[1] Ibid. Fornier—Hist. de la Maison de Guise.

many sincère partisans; and her influence would, doubtless, at this period have been dominant but for the profligate lives of her sisters, whom she insisted upon receiving, and which cast a shadow on her own reputation. Gabrielle never tormented the king with politics or petitions when in his society; her desires she made known to his majesty by letter, and seldom met with refusal. Her beautiful face was ever serene; she was submissive, and cheerfully yielded to the king's caprices; and though rivalled only in influence by Rosny and Villeroy, never showing *la maitresse main.* Henry disliked a practical and masculine-minded woman; his majesty frankly confessed that he committed follies in love, and wished to meet with sympathy, and not to encounter ridicule or censure. Madame Gabrielle, therefore, had but to express desire that the interview between the king and his late rebel subject should be holden at her beautiful château, to have the wish gratified. On the 12th of July, the duke de Mayenne arrived at Monceaux, with six gentlemen. The king was walking in the park, attended by M. de Rosny. Mayenne, when he perceived his majesty, hastened forwards, and kneeling, embraced the royal knees:—"Sire! I return you sincere thanks and homage; you have delivered me by your glorious victories from Spanish arrogance and Italian craft! I thank you, sire, for your clement bounty!" Henry cordially embraced Mayenne, and with a jest aided him to rise; and invited him to walk and view his garden. His majesty's rapid pace, however, was torture to Mayenne, who toiled wearily after the king, panting and heated. Rosny observed, and directed the king's attention to the distress of the duke. "Ventre St.

Gris!" whispered Henry; "if I exercise much longer this heavy body, I might easily avenge all the harm that he has done us: the duke would soon be a dead man." Henry then turned towards Mayenne, graciously saying—"Speak frankly, mon cousin, I walk too fast for you? I have tired you!" "Sire, it is true," exclaimed the duke; "I swear to you, I am so tired and breathless that I know not what to do, so that, without intending it, your majesty would presently have been the death of me! Honour and respect exacted that I should not stop your majesty, nor leave you." Henry laughed heartily. "Be consoled, mon cousin, you shall never meet with worse usage from me. Pardieu! I give you my royal word, which I have never violated, nor intend to violate!" "Sire, I believe you! and hold you capable of every generous impulse which can inspire the mind of the bravest and best of princes. Sire! by the living God, by my honour, faith, and on peril of my salvation, I will hereafter remain your devoted subject. I will never fail you; never abandon you,—and all your wishes and desires I will hold as law!" "Duke, mon ami," responded Henry, the ever ready tears glistening in his eyes, "I trust you; and accept with gratitude your loyal homage. Now go and rest in the château. I have there some capital vin d'Arbois, and Rosny will do the honours. He is one of my faithful servants; and I can tell you feels joy that, at length, you have resolved to love and serve me!"[1] Mayenne then kissed Henry's hand and retired. At the door of the château, waiting to welcome her protegé, stood Gabrielle d'Estrées, her

[1] De Thou—Mém. de Sully. Mém. de Villeroy, t. 5. Cayet Chron. Novennaire. Vie M. de Mayenne. Aubigné—Hist Universelle, liv. 3, p. 636, et seq.

little son in her arms, and attended by her sister, mademoiselle Diane d'Estrées, now the betrothed of M. de Balagny, and other ladies. Mayenne saluted Madame de Monceaux as he might have done the queen. "Marvellous were the congratulations and greetings then exchanged; and madame Gabrielle, taking M. de Mayenne by the hand, daintily led him to her saloon." In the evening a banquet was holden. Gabrielle sat beneath a canopy with the king, and dined alone with his majesty at the *haut dais*. The duke de Mayenne took his repast at a table a foot lower, though joining the royal board. The evening passed in the greatest cordiality; mirth being promoted by the sallies of M. de Sancy and the duke de Bellegarde. The duke spent the night at Monceaux, in order to accompany king Henry to Chanteloup; where his majesty intended privately to visit the cardinal legate, who had arrived at that magnificent mansion on his road to Paris. The king desired to give the cardinal this proof of *bienveillance;* and to honour the Holy See by attention to its representative. "As for M. de Mayenne," facetiously exclaimed the king, "I take him with me, for I am sure he needs bountiful absolution as much as myself." Magnificent preparations had been made in Paris for the public entry of the legate; the pest-stricken city put on gala attire, and prepared to welcome the king, and the illustrious prelate whose mission was one of peace and conciliation.

The cardinal de Medici quitted Rome at the commencement of May, 1596. The especial objects of his mission were to witness the personal ratification by the king of the engagements accepted previous to his absolution by the royal envoys du Perron and

d'Ossat; and to mediate between the crowns of France and Spain. The character of the prelate stood justly high. "The cardinal is about sixty years old; he has the reputation of being just, moderate, wise, and conciliatory. He always promoted the reconciliation of the king with the Church. Everyone approves the selection; and believes that the interview will redound to the honour of God and to the welfare of Holy Church," writes d'Ossat to M. de Villeroy. The cardinal likewise was privately instructed to ascertain the true position and alleged misdeeds of queen Marguerite; the probability of the king's immediate application to the holy see for a divorce; and to report on the possibility of obtaining the crown matrimonial for Marie de Medici, niece of the reigning duke of Tuscany. Extraordinary honours were lavished on the legate; his progress through France was triumphant; everywhere a canopy of state was provided—an honour never offered to the representatives of his holiness by the orthodox courts of Spain and Austria. The cardinal was received on the frontier by M. de Lesdiguières, who escorted him to Lyons. From Lyons the legate was conducted by M. de Guiche to the boundary of his government of the Lyonnais. The marquis de Sourdis received the cardinal on his entry into le Pays Chartrain, and attended him to Chartres; from whence he journeyed to Chanteloup, near to Montlehéry. The day following the arrival of his eminence, July 18, the king, accompanied by the dukes de Mayenne, Bellegarde, and de Rets, and by the cardinal bishop of Paris Gondy, and the bishops of Metz, Chartres, Mans, and Evreux, visited the legate. The particulars of this interview are unfortunately not on record—that it was highly satis-

factory to his majesty was deduced from the approving comment made by Henry during his return to Monceaux on the prediction of his holiness: '*Monsignor Alessandro dei Medici sarete nostro successore.*' The king proceeded to Paris after this interview to make sojourn there only during the day signalized by the entry of the legate. The plague raged with intensity, and no ladies therefore graced the ceremonial. So deplorable was the condition of Paris, that Henry found himself compelled to sign an edict during his brief stay in his capital, transferring the session of an assembly of Notables convoked to meet in Paris during the autumn months, to Rouen.

The young prince de Condé, first prince of the blood, was deputed to receive the legate, and escort him into Paris. Attended by his tutor Pisani, the little prince quitted St. Germain on Sunday, July 19th. A speech had been composed for him by Pisani, and submitted to the revision of the king. When the greetings were over Condé therefore spoke his address to the cardinal, which he had learned by heart. "Monsieur," said he, "the king has done me great honour to ordain that I should receive you, and express his majesty's pleasure that the pope has sent so worthy and illustrious a cardinal as yourself. Be assured, monsieur, that you are truly welcome; and that the king is the devout son of his holiness, and the affectionate ally of the sacred college of cardinals." The cardinal replied, and gave the young prince paternal greeting; but refrained from addressing questions to Condé on the subject of his instruction in the Romish faith, as it was apprehended he might. On arriving in the Faubourg St. Jacques the members of the munici-

pality harangued the cardinal. The parliament of Paris next defiled in procession. Its fiery president de Harlay spoke the address; and alluding to the former mission of the legates during the wars of the League, termed Séga "a firebrand of war, rather than God's holy messenger of peace." The legate appeared not to relish this allusion to his factious predecessors: he replied, "That he was sent by the universal father of the faithful, and therefore could not be charged with intentions so baneful; and that it was his desire so to promote concord and loyalty, that the nation should rejoice at his advent." The duke de Montpensier then escorted the legate to Notre Dame, where "Te Deum" was chanted. Gondy, attended by a throng of prelates and surpliced priests, received his eminence at the portal of the church. At the conclusion of the ceremonial the cardinal legate repaired to the Louvre. The most singular incident of the procession was the presence therein of the little duke de Vendôme, then only two years old, who was carried in the arms of his preceptor. Such was the absorbing desire of Gabrielle d'Estrées to behold her son occupy the rank of prince of the blood, that she disregarded the risk of infection to procure for him a place in a procession so memorable. The king entertained the cardinal de Medici at a banquet. After the festivity Henry quitted the Louvre, and returned to Monceaux, taking in his coach *le petit César*. The legate also left the capital for the château de Noisy, the abode of the duke de Retz—so extreme was the panic occasioned by the ravages of the plague.[1]

The following day the credentials, letters, and faculty granted by Clement VIII. to his legate were

[1] Godefroy—Grand Cerém.

presented to the parliament of Paris; also a mandate from his majesty, commanding the registration of these documents. The members, however, murmured at the tone and power arrogated by his holiness; who recommended in these letters the canons of Trent, and the Constitutions of Boniface VIII., while making casual allusion only to the Concordat of Francis I. and other compacts between the Holy See and the sovereigns of France. The Chambers seemed to dread lest Henry, once so contumacious a heretic, would now, in his homage for the papacy, yield the treasured liberties of the Gallican church without protest. "Our king has no religion," was the saying often on the lips of Henry's subjects. By a strange anomaly, therefore, the orthodox parliament, which had before launched protest after protest against the king's heresy, now deemed it incumbent to repress the catholic zeal of their king! After tedious debates, during which the papal letters were on the point of being altogether rejected, the Chambers passed a vote authorizing the registration, on condition that the cardinal legate respected the liberties and privileges of the Gallican church, as secured by the concordat of 1523. The king, to soothe the wounded dignity of the cardinal, ordered that no mention should be made of this limitation in the letters-patent granted under the great seal, authorizing the cardinal de Medici to exercise legatine authority over the realm.[1] But for the moderation and forbearanre evinced at this juncture by the

[1] De Thou, 116. "Cependant le roi pour faire plaisir au légat, qui le pria qu'on ne lui fit pas cet affront, ordonna qu'a la publication des ses facultés, l'arrêt ne seroit point mis à la suite des lettres-patentes; et qu'il sera seulement enregistré dans les archives de la Cour."

legate, wearisome complications might have ensued. The adherents of the council of Union, emboldened by the presence of the legate, which recalled the old days of anarchy, addressed themselves to his eminence, and condoled on the little respect shown to his sacred mission. They expatiated on the insincerity of Henry's religious zeal; demonstrated especially in the formation of his household, in which Huguenots held a chief rank; and on the licence accorded to Madame, whose chapel, of the hôtel de Soissons was, they said, a perpetual insult to the faithful of the parish of St. Eustache. They exhorted his eminence to sweep away such scandals; to procure the exile of madame Gabrielle; and to investigate the causes which bound queen Marguerite to the sterile rock of Usson, and deprived her of her royal dignities. The sagacious prelate replied mildly, but firmly, to his subtle petitioners: "I have been sent to promote concord, not faction. His holiness is persuaded of the zeal and sincerity of your noble king, and that he will win renown as the Defender of your Faith. I am also persuaded that He who has endowed his majesty with invincible power to establish his earthly crown, will bless the king, and inspire him with a resolve to extirpate heresy."[1]

The matter of finance, meanwhile, continued to paralyse and complicate every incident of the reign. Pecuniary necessity pursued the king; his army, his home administration, his household, the households of queen Marguerite and of Madame, were enveloped in apparent ruin by shameful peculations. The nobles, with but few exceptions, conceived themselves to be at liberty to take indemnity for their

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps. Dupleix.

loans and losses during the war by shameless inroads on the treasury. The public accounts were falsified; and places sold in the provincial courts, with the secret understanding that the holders for the time being should enrich themselves by degrees, either at the expense of the king or of the public. M. de Sancy was one of the most audacious of these peculators. His method of proceeding usually was the following: if a regiment had to be paid, Sancy signed treasury warrants for double the sum required. When no notice was taken of the fraud, Sancy gave himself no further trouble beyond appropriating the surplus; but if the king or Villeroy remarked on the extravagancy of the sum drawn, Sancy, in a voice loud and defiant, declared that the surplus had been absorbed by the payment of old regimental debts contracted during the war; ending his harangue by expressing pathetic surprise at the short memory with which his majesty was endowed in prosperity. The king, therefore, resolved to intrust the regulation of his finances to one individual, responsible, of irreproachable probity; and who, paying court to none, cared not for favour or popularity. But one person possessed these qualifications, and that was Rosny—shy, unsociable, participating neither in gambling revels nor in midnight intrigue, Rosny was the model agent required by Henry. The chief of an ancient but impoverished house, Rosny, despising the *metier* of a courtier, found that laborious study was the shortest path to honour. The character of Rosny was a strange compound of hardness, self-appreciation, and determination. In domestic life he was rigidly just. He treated madame de Rosny with respectful consideration; she was '*mon epouse*;' but he was not an affectionate husband, and

often descanted acrimoniously on her foibles. Rosny's love for Henry IV. was the only tender spot on his heart: this attachment absorbed his time, his mind, and his aspirations. Henry may be deemed fortunate to have discerned this devotion; and to have possessed resolution enough to uphold his faithful servant amid the persecutions that beset his early career from the jealousies of the courtiers. When assailed by the objurgations of his unwilling colleagues of the council, Rosny seldom replied, unless galled by taunts relative to his pedigree of Béthune. Pale, silent, and with compressed lip, Rosny stood behind his master's chair, and suffered the belligerents of the council to battle over their theories, after he had himself, in a few well-chosen words, expressed his own view of the subject under debate. The appointment of a personage of this character, one whom the venal ministers of the king at once feared and scorned, to the most responsible office of the government—that of keeper of the key of the royal treasury—created no slight consternation and cabal. The king first notified his intentions to the constable Montmorency and to Villeroy. The former bowed, and made no reply; Villeroy, with his accustomed glibness of tongue, complimented Rosny, and intimated his intention to draw the patent for signature with the least delay possible. These two noblemen, though they were faithful, and had therefore little to fear from Rosny's scrutiny, disliked the latter, and immediately combined to frustrate the royal intentions. The king, when his ministers quitted the cabinet, perceived their dissatisfaction; turning to Rosny, Henry sharply reproached him for his want of civility and gracious courtesy. Rosny drily replied, "that his assumption of the office of assistant

inspector of finance could not be inaugurated by submission and assiduity towards those whose conduct he was to scrutinize." The king angrily retorted, "that M. de Rosny might please himself, but that he was not going to alienate his nobles to serve so ungracious and surly a servant." His majesty then retired to recount the scene to madame de Monceaux.

Gabrielle, whose hate of Sancy was intense, soothed the king; and recommended him to persevere in his intentions towards Rosny, "who will deliver us all." During the day M. de Rosny had the wit to present himself in the saloon of the favourite to thank her for her assumed protection and favour. The following day Henry went to hunt over the magnificent domain of Liancour. He remained for two days the guest of his old friend madame de Guercheville, now marquise de Beaumont Liancour. Here his majesty was assailed by endless expostulations relative to the office he proposed to confer on Rosny. "This said M. de Rosny will ruin us! He is inexperienced, uncourteous, and probably ignorant of the science of arithmetic!" These arguments had undue weight with Henry; who confessed "that he had had no experience of Rosny's skill as a public administrator;" while the latter had certainly shown himself a novice in the arts of conciliation. When Villeroy, therefore, forwarded the patent for signature, the king handed the document to Beringhen; and desired the latter to put it aside for an interval, as he wished to reflect.

Fortunately for the career of the future great minister, fresh frauds on the revenue came to light, which threw the king into such paroxysms of fury, that, on the counsel of Gabrielle d'Estrées, his

majesty signed the patent in the saloon of the latter, and forthwith despatched Rosny from Monceaux to the scene of the alleged malversations. Henry discovered that the customs and excise of Normandy were entered on the treasury records, as farmed out to MM. Zamet and Gondy, for the nominal sum of 30,000 crowns—an amount scarcely one-third of the annual product of these imposts. Moreover, to be enabled also to appropriate this money, in addition to that gained by their frauds, these dishonest spoliators claimed and took possession of the 30,000 crowns to pay arrears, which they averred were owing to the exchequer. "The king also discovered that the customs of the remaining five great financial divisions of France were let at a quarter of their value—because Zamet, Gondy, and other financiers, with the connivance of MM. du Conseil divided with the latter the immense surplus profits accruing." Such a state of affairs demanded instant reform. Rosny, therefore, departed on a tour of inspection of the *généralités*, or districts under the control of the treasury, accompanied by MM. de la Grange, Caumartin, and Bezouge. One financial district was assigned to the supervision of each of these gentlemen, and four to Rosny: their report was to be made, and presented to the king at Rouen, during the session of the assembly of Notables there convened.

The king also signed at Monceaux, August 7th, letters missive addressed to the parliament of Paris, proroguing the Chambers, on account of the desolating ravages of the plague. Henry was not sorry to have so unanswerable a pretext for suspending the session of that august body during the approach-

ing convocation at Rouen. The king also received news that the cardinal archduke had met with a severe check before the town of Hulst. A serious misfortune there happened to the Spanish arms by the death of M. de Rône, who was killed by a cannon ball as he was sitting in his tent.[1] Albert repaired to the camp from Ghent; and by his presence restored confidence to the army, depressed by the loss of its leader. The infanta contemplated the gallant deeds of her priestly betrothed with complacent exultation; and demonstrated vivid interest in the measures adopted to compel the submission of the territories to be bequeathed to her by her father. Henry, on the 13th of August, repaired to Fontainebleau to visit Madame. During this visit the princess, it appears, succeeded in convincing her brother of the inutility of further solicitations respecting the suit of the duke de Montpensier; as from this period no mention of the project is to be found in the correspondence of the king with Madame. The duke de Montpensier occupied himself thenceforth with the details of his union with mademoiselle de Joyeuse, the preliminaries of which were settled at Rouen during the conferences; as the father of the young princess there presented himself to make submission to Henri IV. Madame had reason to regret her decision: for the king reiterated his resolve never to bestow her on M. de Soissons; and to continue his negotiation for her marriage in Lorraine. When Madame had made experience of the weak and stubborn disposition of the duke de Bar, the contrast must have been mortifying when compared with the

[1] Bentivoglio—Coloma; Herrera; De Thou, etc.

character of the noble prince Montpensier, who offered such humble suit to obtain her hand.

On quitting Fontainebleau Henry visited Gaillon, where an ambassador from the duke de Savoye waited audience. The duke, exhausted by desultory warfare in Provence, was anxious to come to a compromise with a monarch whose power steadily increased. The possession of Saluzzo, seized by the duke during the session of the states of Blois in 1587, and the surrender of the town of Barre in Provence, were the objects of contention between the courts. The duke declined to restore the marquisate to the French crown; while Henry, though not at this period insisting on its surrender, gave no sign either of sanction or disapproval of its absorption into the ducal territories. The war, therefore, in default of a definite renunciation by the king, was carried on between the duke and M. de Lesdiguières. It consisted of a petty capture of forts and small towns, with occasional skirmishes in the mountain passes, the boundaries between France and Savoy.

King Henry made his entry into Rouen on the 17th of October. An illustrious assemblage waited his arrival. The chief peers, lay and ecclesiastical, the presidents of the parliaments of the realm, the legate, the constable Montmorency, the duke d'Epernon—who ventured to kiss the royal hand under the guarantee of his uncle Montmorency—the duke de Joyeuse, another renegade lately restored to obedience—the dukes de Mayenne, Guise, and Elbœuf, the financier Zamet, who, despite his peculations, enjoyed high favour—were all assembled at Rouen. Madame de Monceaux also arrived with César-Monsieur, and established herself in the abbatial residence of St. Ouen, prepared for majesty.

A noble ambassador from queen Elizabeth, the earl of Shrewsbury, also greeted the king—deputed by his mistress to receive from the royal hand the treaty offensive and defensive concluded between the crowns of France and England, and signed by Henry during the month of August; also to invest the king with the Order of the Garter, as a mark of Elizabeth's esteem. "Madame," wrote the king to Elizabeth, "the noble earl well executed your commission; he carries back to you my word of honour and faith, of which your high perfections and benefits, madame, render you the worthy recipient. You have, moreover, condescended to send me the noble and most precious Collar of the Garter, which I have received with profound veneration, and shall treasure supremely."[1] In such fashion Henry continues to flatter his august ally, whom he ever so readily influenced by a few honeyed speeches. The first ceremonial in which the august personages assembled in Rouen participated, was a solemn requiem chanted in the cathedral for the repose of the soul of cardinal Toleto, who died in Rome during the month of June. Henry deemed himself peculiarly obliged to this eminent prelate for services rendered previous to the royal shrift. The demise of Toleto was lamented by his colleagues of the Sacred College; and such was the esteem in which Clement VIII. held the cardinal, that the pontiff marched in procession from the Quirinal to the bedside of the dying prelate, to give him absolution, and to administer the last rites. "The holy father," says d'Ossat, "gave the cardinal his benediction, and afterwards conversed with him for half-an-hour, consoling him, though weeping bitterly himself. When the pope departed he kissed

[1] MS. Cotton Calig. E. ix. fol. 451.

the brow of the dying man; and after the demise of the said cardinal, commanded superb funeral ceremonies."[1] Toleto bequeathed his wealth to the chapter of Sta. Maria Maggiore; the dignitaries, grateful to their benefactor, erected a superb tomb in the choir of their church, within which the remains of the cardinal are deposited.

Festivities followed this lugubrious ceremony. The nobles entertained his majesty; and themselves paid court to Gabrielle d'Estrées, who was again near her *accouchement*, and therefore unable to take a prominent part in the public ceremonials. During the interval before the opening of the states, M. de Rosny suddenly returned from his mission, on the express mandate of the king. Henry had been assailed with misgivings relative to the expediency of the powers which he had intrusted to Rosny. He was aware of the extent to which the treasury was defrauded; but his majesty apprehended the consequences likely to result from the dismissal of so many functionaries, whose misdeeds were to be exposed to public reprobation by the pitiless justice of Rosny. Exaggerated stories were retailed to the king by Sancy and Villeroy of the arbitrary doings of Rosny; who, it was said, filled the prisons with victims, and had inflicted unmerited mortification on individuals of recognized integrity, by placing them under *surveillance;* and compelling them to apply for their

[1] Lettre 80. Toleto was an eminent preacher. He invariably divided his sermons into two heads, theological and moral, and dilated thereon with great eloquence. The cardinal shared the opinion of cardinal du Perron, that no preacher could compose more than one learned and heart-stirring sermon in a week. "Il est impossible de bien prêcher, et prêcher souvent—c'est folie de le croire, etc.," writes du Perron.

salaries to the treasury, instead, as had been usual, of permitting them to deduct these sums from the gross amount of taxation paid to the receivers-general. Rosny, however, profited by the survey; and had received a sum of 500,000 crowns, as arrears and surplus revenue of the one *généralité* which he alone had had leisure to inspect! "What did I witness, and how can I detail the shameful abuses which I discovered; the cunning, the frauds, the falsifications, the plurality of offices, and the dishonest mystification employed, surpass recital." Rosny's arrival at Rouen was characteristic. For fear of peculation, he travelled with his 500,000 crowns, which he had not had leisure or opportunity to convert into portable form. The treasure was packed in barrels, which it took seventy carts to transport. Thus Rosny appeared riding at the head of thirty archers, who guarded his treasure. Henry, impressed by the false relations made to him, at first received him coldly; but nothing could exceed his majesty's indignant astonishment when he heard the able narrative of the latter; and perused the minutes of the accounts which Rosny had caused to be signed by the *receveurs-générals*. "Pardieu!" said Henry, "what atrocious and impudent frauds! But, mon ami, what are you going to do with all these rascally officials and receivers-general, whom I am told you have brought in your suite?" The amazement of Rosny was extreme at this question: he assured his royal master that no foundation existed for this fabrication of his enemies. The treasure brought by Rosny, meanwhile, proved an acceptable boon to the king, who had previously been embarrassed to procure 12,000 crowns to pay his Swiss companies.

Henry, accordingly, the following day, desired Sancy to send to M. de Rosny for the money, and to discharge the arrears. This mandate Sancy gladly obeyed. Believing that Rosny, a civilian, was probably ignorant of the amount needed; or willing perhaps to test the integrity and pliancy of Henry's new minister elect, Sancy sent to desire Rosny to give the sum of 90,000 crowns to the bearer of the warrant for the pay of his majesty's Swiss. Rosny complacently surveyed his well-filled coffers, which he had had ranged round the apartment he occupied in the abbey of St. Ouen, and returned a dry negative to the demand. "I do not know M. de Sancy, nor do I recognize his writing, nor his orders!" contemptuously observed Rosny. "He! Pardieu! we shall soon see whether this Rosny knows not who I am," exclaimed Sancy furiously, when this answer was reported. He then went in search of the king, whom he found walking in the gallery of the monastery, with several lords of the court. "Well, M. de Sancy, what do you here? are you not going to pay my Swiss to-day?" asked his majesty. "Sire!" retorted Sancy, "I am not! for such is not the pleasure of your M. de Rosny, who is playing the emperor in his chamber, sitting savagely upon his silver cags, like an ape on a block. He says he knows nobody. I doubt whether your majesty will have more credit with him than others!" The king retorted angrily; and then sent for Rosny, and commanded him to explain. Rosny obeyed without reserve, to the astonishment of the persons present, who all dreaded the wit and the supposed power of Sancy. From this period Rosny was seldom molested by his colleagues; while he studiously refrained from interfering with their respective departments.

An equitable division was next made of the funds recovered by Rosny's zeal. Twenty new pieces of ordnance were added to the artillery; the troops were paid arrears; the garrisons of the chief fortified towns of the realm were furnished with ammunition and stores; and moreover, a sum of 50,000 crowns was designed by the politic Rosny *pour les menus plaisirs du roi.* A fresh stratagem to falsify the public accounts, meditated by Sancy and his friends the financiers, being discovered and thwarted by the vigilant Rosny, terminated their alleged superintendence of the finances; and shortly afterwards MM. de Schomberg and Sancy resigned office, to the immense relief of the king and his realm.[1]

These feuds raged throughout the month of October. At the end of this period M. de Rosny was installed in his much-coveted supremacy over the exchequer, ready to aid the deliberation of the assembly in their approaching conference on national finance. The assembly of Notables was opened by Henry in person on the 4th of November. The place of assembly was the vast hall or refectory of the Abbey de St. Ouen. A throne was erected at the upper end, on a stage sloping by gradual descent to the floor of the hall. Chairs were placed on this daïs at various gradations, according to the rank of their intended occupants. At the left of the throne places were assigned to the chancellor Cheverny, to the dukes de Montpensier, de Montmorency, d'Epernon, de Joyeuse, de Mayenne, de Retz, and to the marshal de Matignon. Behind these illustrious personages chairs were placed for the four secretaries of state. On the right of his majesty sat the cardinal legate, attended by his secretary, and his colleague the nuncio

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 8ème.

Gonzaga, bishop of Mantua. The cardinal bishop of Paris and a number of distinguished prelates, among whom were the archbishops of Rouen, Bourges, and Lyons, sat at the left of the legate. In the hall below, raised seats were provided for the two chief presidents of the parliament of Paris, de Harlay and Séguier. Deputies were present from the chief parliaments of the realm, and from the high courts. A fair presence, likewise, graced the ceremonial, of which only a few of the most favoured courtiers were aware. A curtain of violet velvet hung behind the royal chair. In a recess sheltered by this screen sat Gabrielle d'Estrées. The royal harangue was distinguished for brevity and point rather than for eloquent combination: the address, however, gave satisfaction to all classes of his majesty's subjects, excepting to the turbulent coterie in Paris, which still acknowledged Philip II., and sighed for the return of the palmy days of the Union. The royal address was as follows:—

"If I wished to earn the title of orator I should have learned by heart some fine and showy harangue, the which I could have pronounced with becoming gravity. Messieurs! my ambition soars to higher distinction. I covet the glorious titles of Liberator and Restorer of this realm! In order to attain this end I have assembled you. You know to your cost, as I do to my own, that when God called me to this crown, I found France not only half ruined, but also quite lost to Frenchmen. By Divine favour, and by the prayers and counsels of those amongst my good servants not called to the profession of arms, and by the sword of my valiant and generous *noblesse* (amongst which I include the royal princes; for our most honoured expletive is it not *foi de gentilhomme?*)

and by my own incredible toils and labour I have saved France. Let us now save this France of ours from financial ruin! Participate with me, my dear subjects, in this second triumph, as you have already shared my first. I have not assembled you, after the fashion of my predecessors, to confirm my fiats: but I have called you to listen to your counsels; to believe you; to follow your advice—in short, to place myself under your control (*tutelle*)—a resolve which has seldom actuated kings who like myself have grey beards and are conquerors. But the intense love which I bear my people; and the desire which inspires me to add the two titles to which I before referred, to my royal appellation of King, renders every concession alike easy and honourable! My chancellor will now more amply inform you of my will."[1]

Respect for the majesty of the throne could not repress the enthusiasm even of that courtly assemblage. Plaudits broke forth; and the patriotic declarations of Henri Quatre passed from lip to lip throughout the hall. The legate rose and complimented the king—while Rosny silently enjoyed the triumph of his hero. "Madame! and what is your opinion?" asked his majesty of madame de Monceaux, anxious that the applause of Gabrielle d'Estrées should mingle with the incense offered him. "Sire!" replied she, "no one could have spoken better: only, I am surprised that a hero like your majesty should have used the words, 'me mettre en tutelle!'"

[1] Bibl. Imp. MS. F. Dupuys, MS. 7, fol. 19. Published, with facsimile of the speech in Henry's own hand, by M. Berger de Xivrey—Lettres Missives, t. 4. At the end of the speech, Henry writes: "Prononcée per le Roy a Rouen le lundi 8 apres dysner 4me Novambre, 1596."

"Ventre St. Gris! madame, you are right! I interpret the passage, however, with the addition, '*me mettre en tutelle avec mon épée au côté!*'"[1] The harangue was composed by the king, without the intervention of his ministers. The original draft of the document exists; and the many erasures, and careful emendations in the bold handwriting of Henry, certify the solicitude bestowed on it by his majesty. The words which displeased madame de Monceaux, however, stand clear in the original document; and had suffered no revision. The king retired on the conclusion of the speech, that his presence might not restrain freedom of debate. Cheverny briefly addressed the assembly; afterwards M. de Rosny laid on a table certain financial statements requisite to facilitate the pending discussions. The three orders separated on the following day, November 5th; and each established a Chamber—the lords temporal, as most numerous, continuing their *séance* in the abbatial hall.

The political position of the realm was first reviewed. The survey covered the name of the valiant king with glory. All the rebel provinces, Bretagne excepted, had laid down arms. A treaty offensive and defensive united the crowns of England and France—a compact to which the revolted provinces of Holland joyfully adhered. The duke of Savoy, driven into his own territories, there maintained a defensive war with his majesty's lieutenant Lesdiguières, in order to close the route to the contested

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Mém. de Villeroy. Madame de Monceaux afterwards rallied the king on his admission, saying, "that, as his majesty was about to place himself under control, she hoped he would first submit to her, and keep the promise he had made to espouse her!"

marquisate of Saluzzo, the capture of which was the aim of the latter. The duke of Lorraine, cured of his *engouement* for the League, had become Henry's ally; and eagerly demanded the hand of Madame for his son and heir. The papal benediction had, also, descended upon France and on the brow of her monarch. This picture, nevertheless, had a gloomy reverse. Five towns, within a period of seven months, had fallen before the arms of the archduke; and preparations were, it was rumoured, in progress for that great stroke of invasion which should convert Henry IV. into the humbled ally of Spain; and so facilitate the inauguration of the reign of Doña Isabel over Flanders. Financial difficulties of gravest moment existed. Cases of gross fraud and criminal appropriations daily transpired, without even the aid of the sifting process of M. de Rosny. The parliaments of the realm were disorganized; justice was feebly rendered; towns clamoured for the restoration of charters, either confiscated by the League, or suspended by the king: other towns, on the contrary, demanded to be relieved from unwelcome responsibilities imposed by the necessity of Mayenne and his colleagues, and reduced to the tranquil *status* which they enjoyed before the outbreak of the rebellion. The chief grievance, however, was the matter of finance; and to elucidate this puzzling problem the States first applied.

The king during this interval amused himself by hunting, and making excursions in the neighbourhood to visit the scene of some of his celebrated battles and skirmishes—a pastime highly distasteful to M. de Mayenne, whose company the king often maliciously invited. Four days after the pageant of the opening of the assembly Gabrielle d'Estrées gave

birth to a daughter. The delight of the king was extravagant in its demonstration. The honours given to a queen of France during her lying-in were lavished on the favourite, whom the king visited in state daily—a homage intended especially to indicate the future royal intents on her behalf. The little princess was baptised with extraordinary pomp in the cathedral: she was named Henriette Catherine. The duke de Montpensier and the chief nobles, and all the foreign ambassadors, joined the procession to the church, where the rite was performed by the cardinal-bishop Gondy. The godfather was the duke de Montpensier; and the godmother Diane d'Estrées maréchale de Balagny. Henry's infatuation, though humoured, met with general reprobation. The popularity and dignified bearing of Gabrielle d'Estrées did not the less render her the mother of the illegitimate children of the king. The parade in the presence of the legate created displeasure in Rome: for however flagrant might be the enormities of queen Marguerite, the king was morally in the same degree guilty as herself; and the legate therefore, by his continued sojourn at court, seemed to countenance the delinquency of his majesty, which, after this public display, he could no longer feign to ignore. The little princess was, like her brother, relieved from the disabilities attending her birth by letters of legitimization, registered by the parliament of Paris during the spring of the following year. Madame de Montmorency a few months previously had given birth to the heir of Montmorency. The king, therefore, resolved to affiance his daughter while in her cradle to the son of his favoured constable; who, while the latter bore the title of marshal Damville and since, had been associated with the vicis-

situdes and triumphs of Henry's career. The project was accepted with complacency by the constable. "It is the fortune of the chiefs of Montmorency to espouse the bastards of the king," says a satirical writer. The young princess, however, was legitimated; and in case her mother attained to the crown royal, the alliance became in the highest degree desirable, even for a Montmorency. The king thenceforth, in his letters to the constable, alludes to the little Henriette Catherine as mademoiselle de Montmorency. "Mon compère, I was this day glad to ascertain that *ma maitresse* was sending an express to inquire after your health and that of your consort. I am very glad that your health continues good; and that you are to arrive here on Friday morning. I am very well, God be thanked, and César also, and the little mademoiselle de Montmorency, for whom I have just had proposed to me a husband rich and illustrious;[1] but I have vowed that she shall be dame de Montmorency et de Chantilly."[2] The king maintained intimate correspondence with the constable; in addition to military discussions they had many pursuits in common. Montmorency passionately loved the chase; and had an enormous stud of horses at Chantilly. The constable was a skilled equestrian; and often used to exhibit his horsemanship, by placing a small piece of money on the stirrup[3] under his foot, which, when he put his horse through all manner of evolutions, never fell to the ground.[4] Montmorency was illite-

[1] With the infant duke de Longueville, whose father was killed in 1596 at Dourlens. The duchess de Longueville was the eldest daughter of the duke de Nevers. Madame de Monceaux gave preference to this alliance.

[2] Bibl. Imp. F. de Bèth. MS. 8946.

[3] The stirrup then was but a slender bar of iron.

[4] Tallement des Réaux.—Historiettes, vol. i.

rate; he scarcely knew how to read, and his signature presents an illegible scrawl. The constable and his beautiful wife, however, agreed admirably. Madame de Montmorency was so impressed with the sublimity of the rank to which she had risen by marriage, that she admitted no one to Chantilly but *habitués* of the Louvre. Her dignity filled every personal desire and aspiration; so that nobody then had a reputation more unblemished than madame la Connétable. It was whispered, however, by the jealous and credulous, that madame de Montmorency, when Louise de Budos, had made pact with the devil to realize her ambitious design of espousing the constable—an alliance to which her birth scarcely entitled her to aspire. Subsequent incidents connected with madame la Connétable seemed to confirm this fable; which was long devoutly believed.

The states, meanwhile, continued their deliberations. Numerous were the theories propounded, examined, and rejected. At length the assembly agreed upon a project of reform, "for the levy, expenditure, and regulation of the finances of the realm," which they presented for the approbation of the king and the privy-council. By the tenor of this proposition MM. des Notables indicated that they believed and acted upon the celebrated declaration made by his majesty in his address on opening the assembly.[1] It was proposed, in the first place, to create a new council, to be named Conseil de la Raison; the nomination of the members of which was to appertain first to the assembly, and then *en permanence* to the sovereign courts of the realm. The duty of these new counsellors was to consist in

[1] Qu'il voulait se mettre en tutelle.

the liquidation of the salaries of civil officers; and to make grants of money for public works, state charities, and national debts—no claimants of public moneys being able to demand a *denier*, unless authorized by the signature of all the members of the council. The revenue, which was calculated at the enormous amount of thirty millions, was to be divided—half to be placed under the control of the Conseil de Raison; half to be administered by the king. His majesty was to use the fund thus placed at his disposal for defraying the salaries of the privy counsellors, ambassadors, the royal household, and the army and artillery. In order to insure the requisite amount of revenue—*i. e.* thirty millions—a new tax was proposed of a *sou* upon every pound weight of provisions, merchandise, etc., sold by retail in all walled towns and cities throughout the realm—wheat alone being excepted from the impost. The amount of revenue to be acquired by the new tax was rated at five millions. When the scheme was laid before the council, infinite was the disapprobation. Great confusion ensued—several members rising together to address the king; others making vehement demonstration of dissent. At length order was re-established; and Cheverny spoke in unequivocal condemnation of the project, which he designated "chimerical and presumptuous." Rosny, whose demeanour the king anxiously watched, sat looking cold and indifferent, with downcast eyes. When his turn to speak came, he rose and briefly said, "that he had nothing to add to all the fine discourses he had been listening to." The king thereupon suspended the deliberation until the next day; saying that the project demanded mature reflection before he hazarded response to the proposal of MM. des

Notables. Henry had no sooner retired than he sent a chamberlain to summon Rosny. He then eagerly demanded the opinion of the latter on the scheme recommended by the unanimous vote of the three orders. Rosny then entered into an elaborate detail of the finances; he proved the project impossible, but advised the king to suffer the essay. He deemed the proposition impertinent, and pregnant with confusion and jealousies. "As for the revenue amounting to the sum calculated by MM. des Notables, your majesty must not believe: the new tax will cause its proposers to be execrated; and, moreover, if established, will bring in a clear revenue of 200,000 crowns, instead of five millions. Your majesty has the right, in accepting this project, to declare upon which sources of revenue you will choose to derive your estimated revenue of fifteen millions—choose, therefore, to draw this revenue from the taxes of the *généralités*, the escheats, the domains of the crown, and the excise." Rosny then predicted that the insuperable difficulties which would be encountered by the new council must lead to its early dissolution; that the members, ignorant of the frauds and malversations practised, would find their coffers empty after the levy of the revenue to be administered by the king. He stated that he had not opined in council, because he deemed that the acceptance of the proposed Conseil de Raison ought to appear as the spontaneous act of the king. That the following day he intended to speak against the project; but he counselled the king to announce his resolution to comply with the recommendation of the assembly. Henry assented; and, at the next session of the council declared, "that, consistently with the harangue which he had delivered at the

opening of the states, he could not reject the unanimous advice of the assembly." The utmost surprise and opposition were evinced; the counsellors, nevertheless, acknowledged that it would be difficult authoritatively to reject the proposal of MM. des Notables, seeing that the assembly acknowledged no superior.

Henry therefore passed to the hall of assembly; and, amid incredible displays of enthusiasm, announced his acceptance of the new projects—the Conseil de Raison, the division of the prerogative of state, and the impost *du sou pour livre*." "Nominate, Messieurs, within twenty-four hours your counsellors, and let them make estimate of the various sources of revenue to produce this 30,000,000, including the new impost. I will then choose, as is my right, the sources from whence my royal revenue shall be derived; and undertake the financial government of that portion, abandoning to your wisdom the collection and expenditure of the remainder of the revenue." The assembly complied, and appointed the cardinal bishop of Paris as chief of the new council—a prelate renowned for his thrift. Rosny smiled grimly when the report of "*ces habiles gens*" was placed in his hand by his royal master. It was then decided, as Rosny had suggested, concerning the levy and source of the royal revenue of 15,000,000*l.*, and the king committed its superintendence to the former. The development of the new council was postponed until the return of the court to Paris, when the promoters of the scheme diligently attempted to realize the project. The council met daily in an apartment of the episcopal palace, assigned for the purpose by Gondy. Much wearisome responsibility was thus for the time spared to

Rosny at the outset of his ministerial career.[1] The officers of the districts from whence the royal revenue was derived soon recognized the master-hand and clear head dominating. Rosny, also, made a discovery which inspired him with frantic solicitude, inasmuch as he was compelled for the period to dissimulate—he found that the farming of the chief portion of the revenues of the state had been sublet to the grand duke of Florence by the financiers, de Gondy, Zamet, Senarmy, Le Grand, Parent, and L'Argentier!

King Henry, whilst the Notables of his realm next deliberated on the most approved mode of re-establishing the authority of the criminal courts throughout France, authorized a notable act of justice. Charlotte de la Trimouille was declared innocent by the parliament of Paris of the crime of poisoning her late husband, Henri I. prince de Condé; a decree ratified at this period by the king in council. If, in effect, madame de Condé was innocent of the terrible crime laid to her charge, a more cruel case of persecution history does not record. Accused of the deed, shut up in a little tower in St. Jean d'Angely, threatened with torture, and finally condemned to decapitation six weeks previous to her *accouchement*, the anguish of the unfortunate princess defied description. Her judges relented when she became the mother of a son—partly because, in the event of the princess suffering for the crime of murder and adultery, the rights and title of her infant son Condé passed to his eldest uncle, the prince de Conty, a Roman Catholic; partly because the parliament of Paris issued a decree forbidding

[1] De Thou. Mém. de Sully, who details at length the schemes of MM. des Notables de Rouen.

cognizance of the affair to a provincial tribunal, and cited the princess to be tried by her peers. For eight years, nevertheless, madame de Condé lived in her tower, deprived for five years of the sight of her children Condé, and the princess Eleanore; and subjected to the stern guardianship of madame de Brissembourg, a zealous Calvinist. The termination of the war brought respite to the princess; she was liberated from her prison, and was suffered to reside in Paris, at the hôtel de Condé, until the supreme tribunal had examined the minutes of her trial at St. Jean, and finally pronounced her doom. Citations were thrice issued to the prince de Conty and to M. de Soissons, brothers-in-law of the princess, calling upon them to prosecute, or to show cause why the princess should not be declared absolved. No response was made by the princes, except that they protested through their respective advocates, against any decree rendered by the parliament; as they said that the alleged crime of their sister-in-law ought to be examined, and sentence pronounced by the king in council. The parliament refused to accept or acquiesce in this plea, and on the 24th of July gave a decree proclaiming Catherine Charlotte de la Trimouille acquitted of the charge. The court ordered the princess to be set at liberty, and placed in the enjoyment of her dower. Moreover, at the suit of Madame de Condé all the papers and depositions were publicly burned in the presence of the first president de Harlay; and eventually, the former obtained letters patent from the king, commanding the insertion of the decree of the parliament of Paris on the registers of all the provincial parliaments. On the official declaration of her innocence, madame de Condé repaired to Rouen to thank the king, and

to make a renunciation of the reformed faith in the presence of the legate. The public recantation of the princess had been delayed until after she was absolved of the crimes laid to her charge; lest it should be said that she sought thereby to propitiate her judges. The abandonment by madame de Condé of her faith was ascribed by some to resentment at the treatment which she had received from her Protestant judges; by others, to political motives, arising from her position as mother of the heir-presumptive.[1]

The fêtes given by the king to celebrate the abjuration of madame de Condé and the recovery of Gabrielle d'Estrées were superb, despite the impoverishment of the treasury. During the month of December, Henry became indisposed with low fever, a malady which he alleviated by change of residence. He accordingly visited Dieppe, and the fields of Arques and Aumale: his majesty then returned to Rouen, where many political matters, at the opening of the new year, claimed his attention. Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Anthony Mildmay, had had serious misunderstandings with king Henry on the interpretation of the treaty just concluded. In a letter addressed to the earl of Essex, the king makes bitter complaint of the conduct of this ambassador, whom he accuses of Spanish tendencies; and of being persuaded that "the welfare of the queen, his mistress, depended on the reconciliation of England with the house of Burgundy." Consequently, his majesty prayed the earl to use his influence to obtain the appointment of an envoy likely to promote

[1] All the acts of this celebrated process are contained in MSS. de Brienne, Bibl. Imp. De Thou, and other noted historians of the period quote therefrom.

union between the two crowns; and especially to uphold the alliance recently cemented. Elizabeth and her ministers had demonstrated jealousy on the alleged intentions of the pope to open negotiations with Philip II. to reconcile the realms of France and Spain. The cardinal de Medici, to whose mission of legate the title of plenipotentiary extraordinary had been united, and who was received with special distinction, and honoured by many private audiences of the king, became the subject of angry complaint. It was also ascertained by the English council that the general of the Franciscans, Bonaventura Calatagirone, had been secretly sent by the pope to Madrid; where, after several conferences with Philip, his catholic majesty despatched the reverend father to Brussels on a mission to the archduke. The condition of king Philip, and his known desire to secure the peaceful recognition of his beloved daughter by the people of the Low Countries, rendered it probable that his catholic majesty was now willing to proffer concessions. Elizabeth had, moreover, reason to dread the vindictive resentment of a prince with whom she had never been at peace; and who, at the close of his life, might seek to assuage this animosity by his recognition of Henri Quatre, and of the independence of the seven United Provinces—thus depriving the queen of her most puissant allies.

Henri Quatre, however, desired no intimate alliance with the Spanish crown. The diminution of the power of the house of Austria was the key of Henry's foreign policy, when the internal affairs of France permitted him to exercise independent action. The formation of a great league, which should control the dominion of the Spanish and Austrian

Hapsburgs, was the project which already occupied the mind of Henry IV. At the close of the year 1596, his envoys. Guillaume Ancel and Jacques de Bougars, were traversing Germany to propose to all the protestant and independent German houses their adhesion to the league offensive and defensive, between the crowns of France, England, and the states of Holland. The ambassadors visited the courts of the Elector Palatine, the landgrave of Hesse, and of the duke de Deux-Ponts. These princes, though they declined to sign the alliance, showed no aversion to the project, provided that all the princes of the empire agreed to the confederation. They, moreover, expressed desire that the kings of Denmark and Scotland should be consulted; and their states included in the treaty. Ancel next visited the court of Saxony, which he did not find propitious. At Berlin he was received with compliments and festivities; but the elector of Brandenburg declined to join the alliance. As no prince seemed inclined singly to brave the vengeance of the Hapsburgs by taking the initiatory steps, Ancel, to his great mortification, beheld the failure of his mission. The princes of the empire abounded in good wishes towards Henry IV., and promised him aids of men, and loans under certain conditions; but such was the moral influence exercised by Philip II. and his nephew the emperor, that not one petty potentate presumed to join a league, the avowed object of which was the curtailment of the power of Austria. Don Francesco de Mendoza the agent of the king of Spain, skilfully opposed the projects of the French ambassadors; and tried to unite the catholic states against the "rebel upstarts," as he termed the sovereigns of England and France. The regent of Sax-

ony, the marquis of Baden, and the duke of Wurtemberg, were amongst the most determined supporters of Spanish interests. The king of Poland, likewise, was the faithful ally of the empire; his zeal being, moreover, stimulated by the exhortations of the famous cardinal Gaëtano, once legate in France during the days of Mayenne's ascendancy; but who then was the representative of Rome at the court of Warsaw. Henry IV., despite the formidable obstacles which he encountered, adhered throughout his reign to the political programme suggested at this period by the obstinate aggressions of the catholic king; and by the yoke which the cabinet of Madrid sought to impose on every European power. Eventually, the faithful ally of the king, Elizabeth of England, was inspired by the same designs; which Henry often discussed with Rosny, who subsequently promoted, as will be seen, a policy which he deemed enlightened and liberal.

The three orders, meanwhile, continued their deliberations, and presented their "*cahiers*" of grievances, signed by the duke de Montpensier, the cardinal de Gondy, and the marshal de Matignon, to his majesty in council early during the month of January, 1597. The clergy recommended the reformation of nunneries; the holding by metropolitans of provincial synods; and a more impartial choice in the nomination to benefices. His majesty was requested to consult the metropolitan of the diocese before transmitting the name of candidates for the sanction of his holiness, with whom rested the faculty of induction to sees. The nobles desired that as their order had borne the chief burden of the war, ecclesiastical benefices might be given to members of noble families, impoverished by their

liberal aids to sustain the crown; also, that the king would receive as many pages into his household as the royal revenue might permit. The Tiers Etat deplored the prevalence of vice, luxury, and infidelity; and counselled his majesty to adopt rigid economy in finance; to dismiss embezzlers of the public revenue; and to enact sumptuary laws to quell the extravagance in dress in which the women of the realm indulged. Henry graciously accepted the report; and promised to give his zealous attention to the grievances and admonitions so loyally presented by his Notables.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

1597.

Henri Quatre and Gabrielle d'Estrées—M. de Sancy—His imprudent speech—Jealous violence of the king—Attitude of queen Marguerite—Her reply to M. de Rosny on the matter of her divorce—Letter of queen Marguerite to Gabrielle d'Estrées—Pecuniary troubles of the queen—She borrows from the Venetian republic—Carnival of 1597—Madame Catherine—Banquet at the Hôtel Montmorency—The fall of Amiens—Details—Gallantry of the king—M. de Rosny and his financial projects—Consternation of the courtiers—Gabrielle d'Estrées retires from Paris to Monceaux—Military designs of the king—Coldness of the English court—Anxiety and illness of king Henry—He proceeds to Monceaux—Measures of finance—The parliament offers factious opposition, and opposes the design of creating fresh offices in the courts of judicature—The members petition the king—Henry replies to the deputation—Seditious movements in the capital—Alienation between the king and Madame—Henry returns to the Louvre—Honours conferred on Gabrielle d'Estrées—The king repairs to La Chambre Dorée, and orders the registration of his edicts—Disaffection shown by the High Court—Siege of Amiens—The camp, and the arrival there of Gabrielle d'Estrées—She is created duchesse de Beaufort—Her unpopularity—Negotiation commenced by the Franciscan Calatagirone—Correspondence

of Henry IV. with the duke de Piney Luxembourg—Attitude of Philip II.—March of the archduke viceroy—Albert menaces the royal camp before Amiens—His retreat—Correspondence of the king—His letter to M. de Crillon—Advances upon Dourlens—Death of M. de St. Luc—The post of grand-master of artillery bestowed on the marquis de Cœuvres—Surrender of Amiens—Clemency of Henri Quatre—His interview with the marquis de Montenegro—Negotiation proceeds for the ratification of peace—Correspondence of the king with his ambassador in Rome—Anger of queen Elizabeth at these overtures—Henry visits Monceaux and Fontainebleau—Assault on M. de Mornay by the marquis de St. Phal—Sympathy of the king—He orders the arrest and punishment of M. de St. Phal.

THE king returned to Paris at the commencement of February, 1597, accompanied by Gabrielle d'Estrées, to share the festivities of the approaching carnival, and to be present at the Foire de St. Germain. The pestilence was abated; and Henry desired to revive the trade of Paris; and to restore confidence, by holding his court at the Louvre. Madame also journeyed from Fontainebleau, and took up her abode in the hôtel de Soissons, where her first act was to celebrate a public *prêche*. On her return to Paris, the princess found much to alienate, and to offend her just susceptibility relative to Gabrielle d'Estrées. The king laid no restraint on his admiration for his beautiful mistress; and testified it by so public a homage as greatly to disquiet the princess. The speedy marriage of the king with madame de Monceaux was a topic hotly discussed. Henry privately confirmed this his intent to his sister; which intimation did not tend to make the position of Madame more tolerable. Amongst the most ardent partisans of the favourite were the constable de

Montmorency, the dukes de Mayenne, de Bellegarde, the chancellor de Cheverny, the archbishop of Bourges, the bishop of Evreux, and all the members of the house of Estrées. M. de Rosny, though showing personal deference for Gabrielle d'Estrées, was supposed to be averse to her union with the king; for such was Henry's regard for the opinion of the former, that he had not as yet seriously discussed the matter with Rosny, dreading the sternest of protests against his contemplated weakness. Sancy was the personage who alone presumed openly to ridicule the project; and whose ironical bearing when he approached to pay his respects to madame de Monceaux was the subject of general comment. The king nevertheless favoured Sancy, finding his conviviality congenial, and remembering his services on the demise of Henry III.[1]

After the siege of La Fère, Henry therefore requested Sancy to journey to Rome, on a secret mission concerning his divorce and re-marriage, in order that his holiness, being thus privately informed of the royal projects, might instruct his legate the cardinal de Medici accordingly. Sancy replied: "Procure a divorce from queen Marguerite before you mention a fresh alliance: yet consider, sire, why should you resort to such extremity? Your

[1] M. de Sancy rendered notable service to Henri IV. during the wars of the League. He raised and paid a body of 3000 mercenaries at his own cost; and on the demise of Henry III. his enthusiasm for the cause of the king insured the adherence of most of the Swiss and German levies in camp. M. de Sancy left no heirs. His famous diamond he bequeathed to his sister Madame de Montglat, gouvernante des enfans de France after the marriage of the king with Marie de Medici. Madame de Montglat sold this precious jewel to Henri IV.

majesty had better leave the rank of consort to madame Marguerite: neither of the august ladies to whom you allude can dispute for the palm of chastity; but the queen at least has the merit of descending from the most illustrious house of Christendom!" The good-natured king responded with a jest to this sally: Gabrielle d'Estrées, however, remembered; and consequently had ardently espoused the cause and the financial reforms of Rosny. She spoke, moreover, of Sancy in terms of reprobation; and declared, that the profligacy of his habitual discourse compelled her to close to him the saloons of the hôtel Schomberg. This example being likewise followed by Madame, who was in reality outraged, and by the duchesse de Montmorency, Sancy found his influence diminished. Still, he might have recovered his position had he possessed pliability or tact. His indignation at what he termed "the assumptions of madame Gabrielle;" his jealousy of Rosny, and of M. de Roquelaure, also a famous wit of the court, rendered it impossible for Sancy to restrain his tongue. One day about this period, the king invited Sancy to accompany Villeroy, Montpensier, madame la Marquise, and himself, to take an airing in the environs of Compiègne. The conversation was purposely led by the king to the subject of his marriage with Gabrielle d'Estrées; because the latter maintained that Sancy hated her, and that the crown matrimonial would not protect her against his wicked sarcasm. The king asserted that Sancy dared not even then contravene the project in their presence. Gabrielle, therefore, asked M. de Sancy, whether her son César, in the event of her marriage, could become the legitimate heir of the throne? The

imprudent Sancy coloured; and then harshly replied, in a loud tone: "Madame, no! In France the bastards of our kings are always the sons of harlots!"[1] The eyes of Gabrielle d'Estrées filled with tears at this unmannerly attack, and, glancing at the king, she drew down her veil. An angry frown contracted the royal brow: his majesty, however, made no reply; and the party arrived at the palace without having broken silence. Henry escorted madame de Monceaux to her apartment; at the door of which he coldly dismissed Sancy. The latter, by the advice of his friends, retired to his castle of Dourlens, until he had ascertained the disposition of the king. Henry made no comment on the absence or on the return of M. de Sancy; and never alluded in the presence of the latter to the scene in the coach, which, however, Henry detailed to Rosny, with great bitterness. Sancy's favour virtually ceased from that period; though his disgrace was not manifest until the following year.

Although the conduct of madame de Monceaux continued irreproachable, yet the king still demonstrated grave displeasure whenever Gabrielle entertained the duke de Bellegarde. One day Henry sent Beringhen to the hôtel of his mistress to inquire after her health. Beringhen, while waiting for his answer, saw an open letter lying on the toilette of the favourite, which he recognized to be in the handwriting of M. de Bellegarde. He informed the king of this discovery; as Beringhen belonged to the

[1] Mém. de Villeroy, t. 5. Discours Apologetique de M. de Sancy. "Je lui repondis," writes Sancy, "sans aucun respect, ce que je pensois être de la raison, et de mon devoir, pour l'empêcher de plus penser à cela."

party hostile to the elevation of madame Gabrielle. Bellegarde had written to madame de Monceaux, respecting his *liaison* with mademoiselle de Guise, to request her powerful influence in moderating the anger evinced by the young duke de Guise. Henry, however, conceived such suspicion of this intercourse, that he caused the hôtel of his mistress to be watched, that intimation might be given him when the duke de Bellegarde visited madame de Monceaux. The king had not long to wait: the same afternoon Bellegarde presented himself before his majesty had had interview with Gabrielle. In an access of passion Henry summoned the captain of his guard, M. de Praslin, and commanded him to proceed to the apartment of madame la Marquise, and "slay the personage with whom she was then *tête-à-tête!*" Praslin bowed and withdrew: fortunately, he understood too well the character of *le bon et juste Henri* to act on the impetuous mandate he had received. He however summoned his archers, and proceeded to the hôtel of madame de Monceaux, making so many delays and so much noise during his progress to her saloon, that Bellegarde, who always apprehended some catastrophe from the king's jealousy, had leisure to retire. Praslin, demanding admittance in the name of the king, informed madame de Monceaux of the orders given by his majesty.[1] A contention which lasted several days ensued between the king and his mistress. Gabrielle reproached Henry for his violence; she wept, and declared herself the victim of his majesty's selfish passion; and that Henry had solemnly vowed, when established on the throne, to

[1] Dreux du Radier—Vie de Gabrielle d'Estrées. Hist. des Amours de Henri le Grand, par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine Guise, subsequently princesse de Conty.

wed her—as without such a promise, she would rather have ended her days in the Bastille than have condescended to accept his majesty's suit! The king, however, had essayed the temper of his people on this important matter of his divorce; and had made overtures to queen Marguerite, with success. The reconciliation of the king with the holy see had arrested further negotiation; as the intention to assemble a national synod to pronounce on the affair of the royal divorce was then of course abandoned. Marguerite at first promised to co-operate in a project which would release her from irksome restraint, adjust her pecuniary affairs, and endow her with a revenue ample, and regularly paid. When the intention of his majesty to espouse his mistress transpired, Marguerite's pride of birth rose; and she resolved thenceforth to offer every impediment to the divorce. "To a royal princess, I would willingly cede my crown, that legitimate heirs might be born to the king—but to a mistress and her offspring, I will never yield!" said Marguerite to her confidential friends, madame de Retz and others. At this period Marguerite was suffering great privation: her income had been left unpaid for a year and a half; and to maintain her household at Usson, the queen pledged her jewels to the Venetian republic;[1] which, in its zeal for Henry IV., advanced her majesty a welcome loan. The sentiments of the queen were shared by Henry's most attached friends, and by the people generally. It was felt that to accept Gabrielle's son, César, as the legitimate heir to the throne, would be an act pregnant with the direst political consequences. The sin of Monsieur's birth—he being the offspring

[1] Dames Illustres—Helarion de Coste. Mongez, Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

of a double adultery—could never be effaced; even by the plenary authority of the holy see, supposing that the pope might be induced to consent to the project of the king. In the event of Gabrielle's assumption of the crown-matrimonial, the eldest son of the royal pair, therefore, would be compelled by the brand of illegitimacy to cede his rights to the first male child born to his parents after their marriage—a disposition which, on the demise of the king, would probably, by a contest between the brothers, replunge the kingdom into anarchy—even if Condé and the princes of the blood were willing to take oath of allegiance to any son of Gabrielle d'Estrées. These objections were seriously reviewed by the king: nevertheless, his attachment to Gabrielle, and the frequent menace of the latter to leave the court and retire to a convent unless the king repaired the wrong which he had forced upon her, banished from the royal mind a due sense of the paramount duties of his kingly office. There is no doubt, also, that Henry was encouraged in his resolve by the divisions and incapacity of the princes of Bourbon. The stain on the birth of the young Condé, though effaced by edict of parliament, was never forgotten by the people, and always remained a matter of conjecture. The infirmities of the prince de Conty rendered his opposition little to be dreaded: the count de Soissons, perfidious, and crafty in his designs, opulent, and hating the king for thwarting his marriage with Madame, was the enemy most to be apprehended. Latterly, an instinctive feeling on the part of the king, that M. de Soissons might hereafter prove the deadly opponent of his son César, added irresistible weight to the many reasons which

induced Henry at this period arbitrarily to withhold from Madame the husband of her choice. The warmest partisans of Henry IV. cannot deny that the king, on several important occasions, sacrificed the true welfare of his realm to gratify his passions. The legate, meantime, rarely visited the hôtel Schomberg: though the holy see made no overt opposition to the king's projected divorce, yet Clement deprecated the elevation of madame de Monceaux; and predicted frightful calamity if the little César-Monsieur was proclaimed heir to the crown of his royal father. At the opening of the year 1597, however, the star of Gabrielle d'Estrées shone: queen Marguerite addressed her in the humble strain of adulation; prayed for her protection; and declared herself ready to revoke, at the request of the favourite, the donation of an abbey, which she had bestowed on one of her early companions. On the arrival of madame de Monceaux in Paris from Rouen, queen Marguerite, though branding La Marquise in private with the opprobrious appellation of "*cette baggasse*," deigned to write the following letter:—

Queen Marguerite to Madame la Marquise de Monceaux.[1]

"MADAME LA MARQUISE—The commandment which I have received from the king, and your recommendation, could not have concerned a personage I am better affected towards than M. de Roquelaure; as he is so esteemed by the king and you, and is also one of my oldest and best friends. I have forwarded to him, therefore, letters of induction, and have revoked those which I had issued

[1] Guessard, Lettres de Marguerite de Valois, p. 326. Bibl. Imp. MS. Dupuy, t. 217, fol. 58.

in favour of madame de Monastere. I bless this opportunity, which has enabled me to be useful to a friend[1] whom I esteem; and whose request has given me the pleasure of receiving letters from the king and you—a happiness of which I have long been deprived. I have therefore suffered much solicitude, fearing that the artifice of my enemies had alienated your favour and friendship; which I earnestly desire to cultivate and to retain, as all my actions combine to testify. I pray you, madame, to accept this assurance from me; oblige me by imparting my words to the king, and believe, that my desires will be found in complete conformity with those of his majesty and your own. I speak of your will as united; for I esteem that by conforming myself to the desire of one, I content both parties. I say not this without reason; as I learn that certain persons of my friends have made you propositions which may have led you to believe that my intention is other than it is; I therefore take this opportunity to write to you, and beg you to permit me to speak to you frankly, as to one whom I hold to be my sister, and whom, after the king, I most honour and esteem. I pray you, therefore, that whenever the king speaks to you of me, you will assure him that I never have had any intent to constrain him; that any condition of life will be agreeable to me, provided that I possess his favour. Also, say, that now God has been pleased to show so much mercy to this realm, as to give him the crown and substance of the kings my father and brothers, that it will please him to act as my brother; and to continue the protection accorded to me by the said kings and himself. I have, madame, such confidence in the assurances of friendship which you have given me, that I desire no other mediator than yourself to make known my requirements to the king—to whom I dare not address so long a letter, for fear of wearying him; but my words, when issuing

[1] Je benis cette occasion qui me donne l'heur de faire chose utile a un amy (Roquelaure) que j'estime tant."

from your beautiful mouth, cannot fail to be welcome. Do me the kindness, therefore, to represent to his majesty that during the session of the states[1] I refrained from quitting this castle, as I dreaded, if I showed myself, lest some zealous but inconsiderate person might importune his majesty to act against his design, the which I desire to promote rather than to frustrate. Therefore, although my pecuniary necessity is urgent, and I am tormented by my creditors, I prefer to suffer extremity of trouble, rather than to inflict any on his majesty. My necessity, however, continues pressing, so that I can no longer remain here, where I am suffering all manner of inconvenience and privation. If the king, therefore, would permit me to retire to one of my houses — the farthest off, if so it please him, which I possess from the court—he would concede a great relief. I should, moreover, vow to you, madame, perpetual obligation—lasting as the faithful affection which I have given to your merit—in deference to which I subscribe myself, as your

"Very affectionate and most faithful friend,

"MARGUERITE.

"D'Usson, ce 24 Fevrier, 1597."

The pecuniary necessities and depression of Marguerite must have been terrible ere her haughty spirit submitted to indite this abject epistle to her rival. A position more forlorn and hopeless cannot be imagined than that of the solitary captive of Usson. Without a friend in the puissant realm over which her kindred reigned, penniless, deprived by her misconduct and by the force of circumstances of the brilliant social and literary career in the delights of which she once revelled; finding herself compelled to aid in her own degradation, and herself to lay her royal crown at the feet of a rival, to command even

[1] Of Rouen.

daily bread—the fate of the last princess of the house of Valois surpassed in bitterness the luckless destinies of all the grandchildren of Francis I. The solitude of her abode increased the wretched lot of the exile of Usson. The castle was perched on the summit of a rugged and almost inaccessible rock. On one side yawned a precipice; facing the south loomed the rocky and toilsome path, leading up from the valley below to the drawbridge portcullis of the castle.[1] The castle was situated in the midst of a district hostile to the unfortunate Marguerite; who on many occasions owed her life to the strength of her fortress refuge. Often the assaults of famine cruelly tried the desolate inmates—once a pestilence carried off half of Marguerite's garrison. During the nineteen years of the queen's sojourn in this castle, she never once passed its portal. Insult, and probably a harsher captivity, would have been the penalty of the venture. The royal lieutenant over Auvergne showed neither compassion nor respect for the consort of his sovereign: the scandal of the queen's life was deemed a lawful pretext for treating her with contumely. The king, who found ready and plausible defenders for his own moral aberrations, certainly showed little mercy or consideration for his unhappy consort—allowing her to starve in miserable exile, whilst he heaped profusion

[1] Peganiol de la Force—Description de la France. "Bien forte place, voire imprenable, que le bon et fin renard Louis XI. avoit rendue en partie telle pour y loger ses prisonniers, les tenant là plus en sureté cent fois qu'a Loches, Bois de Vincennes, et Lusignan."—Brantome, Eloge de Marguerite de Valois. Hélarion de Coste says, "Que le château étoit si bien fortifié que le soleil seul y put entrer par force." The castle was dismantled in the year 1634, by order of cardinal Richelieu.

on his mistress and her children. The letters of the king to Marguerite, nevertheless, were lenient, and wanting in dignity whenever he wrote on the subject of his much-desired divorce. The king then even condescended to flatter and to soothe by fallacious promises—leaving all pecuniary arrangements, however, to the hard adjudication of Rosny and Duplessis Mornay.

Henry, meanwhile, participated, with much apparent joyousness, in the diversions of the carnival of 1597. Indeed, his majesty's pastimes recalled the riotous forays of Henry III. and his *mignons* in the streets of Paris. The king, accompanied by madame la Marquise, and by a great company of cavaliers, perambulated the streets in disguise, and entered unexpectedly the houses of several distinguished citizens. No violence was committed, however, as in olden times; when the frolics of the courtiers were anything rather than pastimes to the unfortunate householder doomed to such visitation. The king was invariably unmasked by the fair hand of la Marquise on entering a mansion. Henry was not, however, strictly orthodox in his frolics. On the first Sunday in Lent the king, to the extreme scandal of the legate, organized a procession of "sorcerers," which his majesty joined, disguised by a long beard, and his apparel adorned with various diabolical emblems. Thus attired, the king showed himself in the streets, and ended the frolic by a revel at the hôtel of Zamet. An entertainment of the most superb description was also in preparation, to be given by the constable de Montmorency, to celebrate the baptism of his son and heir, whom the king was to present at the font as sponsor. The hôtel de Montmorency, the abode of madame de Montpensier

during the days of the league, now cleansed from its democratic pollutions, was magnificently refurnished and decorated for the occasion. Eight days previous to the *fête*, all the cooks and confectioners of Paris were pressed into the service of the Montmorency. Money was lavishly supplied to purchase rarities for the banquet. Envoys were despatched to London, Madrid, and to Naples, to buy rare viands, flowers, and fruits. Two sturgeons were purchased for 100 crowns each; 350 crowns were spent on fruit; and as many *poires de bon Chrétien* bought as could be found, at the price of a crown each pear. Ballets, masques, and dances were arranged; twelve chief noblemen and their consorts were selected by the constable, amongst whom were M. and Madame de Rosny, and asked to appear, attended by a *cortége* of young nobles and ladies, their kindred and allies. These high personages were thus to pass in state into the hall of assembly according to their rank, immediately after the king and madame la Marquise. The baptismal ceremony was performed in the chapel des Enfans Rouges.[1] Madame excused herself from being present at the revel, as anxiety had rendered her indisposed; "besides," as Catherine sorrowfully observed, "there is here no place for me. I cannot yield to madame la Marquise—the king, therefore, though he does not enjoin my absence, will bear it joyfully." The honours of the *fête*, therefore, remained to Gabrielle d'Estrées. Her loveliness, it is reported, never appeared more fascinating. She wore

[1] Founded by Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre, and subsequently incorporated in l'Hopital Général in 1657. The costume of the children was red, at the desire of Francis I., who desired thereby to indicate that they derived subsistence from the alms of the faithful.

a robe of pale-green brocade, and her hair was powdered, and adorned by twelve diamond stars. The king, who, to the amusement of many of the courtiers, and to the disgust of others, loved to render conspicuous his devotion to his mistress, publicly found fault with the *coiffure* of madame la Marquise, which, he said, "ought to have been composed of fifteen jewelled stars;" and continued to banter her on the subject during the evening. The duchesse de Montmorency, mademoiselle de Guise, madame de Villars, madame de Nemours, madame de Pisani,[1] and madame de Noirmoutiers, were distinguished for beauty and costly attire; and formed during the evening the *entourage* of the favourite.[2] Daylight appeared before king Henry left the saloons of the hôtel Montmorency. The king, on arriving at the Louvre, retired, and commenced to disrobe. While so occupied, a great tumult was heard in the court-yard of the palace. In a few moments the door of the royal closet opened, and Bellegarde entered, followed by a courier. Kneeling, the duke presented his majesty with a despatch from the count de St. Paul, governor of Picardy. The town of Amiens had fallen, and was garrisoned by Spaniards! The dismay of the king was great; the intelligence of the sudden overthrow of so populous and strong a town seemed incredible. From the frontier to the gates of Paris, no stronghold now existed to impede the march of the armies of the victorious archduke. Henry despatched Beringhen to summon Rosny. "I

[1] Donna Giulia Savelli. The marquise de Pisani had only one daughter Catherine de Vivonne, the celebrated marquise de Rambouillet, who was born in 1588. Madame de Pisani first espoused a prince of the Orsini family.

[2] Journal de Henri IV.—Mém. de Sully.

quitted the hôtel de Montmorency at two o'clock, and had been in bed more than an hour and a half when Beringhen suddenly entered my chamber, and with a face puckered by intense consternation, announced that the king wished to speak with me." Rosny rose in alarm, and repaired quickly to the Louvre. The scene in the royal chamber which greeted him proclaimed that some disaster had occurred. Henry was walking up and down the apartment half attired, his hands behind his back, and his countenance expressive of the deepest dejection. Gabrielle d'Estrées sat a little apart weeping, her hair hanging dishevelled over her shoulders. The lords of the bedchamber stood around with aspects pale and disquieted, as if they already heard the trumpets of the archduke. When the king saw Rosny he hurried towards him, and wringing his hand, exclaimed — "*Ah, mon ami! quel malheur! Amiens est pris!*" "At this announcement, I confess," writes Rosny, "that I felt stunned. A place so strong, so well provided with military stores, in the vicinity of Paris, and the key of the province of Picardy, to be taken without previous warning, before we knew even that the town was menaced!" The king watched the countenance of his faithful servant. "This blow, Rosny, proceeds from God!" said he; "those miserable townsmen of Amiens, who in their pride refused the garrison which I offered, have ruined themselves and me! By the help of God we will yet prevail! We have played too long the king of France; it is now time to enact again the rôle of the king of Navarre!"[1] Touched by the

[1] Sully, liv. 9ème. Mathieu, Hist. du règne de Henri IV., liv. 2. Dupleix, Vie de Henri IV. Etoile. Tortora—Hist. di Francia.

profound distress of the king, Rosny requested to be informed how the catastrophe had occurred; at the same time, cheerfully assuring the king that treasure was forthcoming, not only for the recapture of Amiens, but for that of several other places also. Those persons present, who were cognizant of the state of the finances, held these words to be the delusion of an enthusiast. The king, however, impatiently dismissed all present, in order to confer with Rosny, who longed to comfort his master, though he himself confesses, that at the time he knew not how the requisite funds were to be raised. "Adieu, *ma maitresse!*" exclaimed Henry, as Gabrielle, weeping, threw herself into the king's arms. "Take heart! we must lay aside our mimic arms, and mount on horseback to wage a real war!" After conference with Rosny, the king took repose for a few hours. On rising, he held council with his ministers. Before mid-day the Louvre was deserted, and the gallant king on his road to confront the enemy. Such was the sad *reveille-matin* of the constable's gorgeous *fête*.

The town of Amiens possessed many privileges and peculiar charters—amongst which was one that exempted the inhabitants from the *surveillance* of a garrison. After the fall of Calais and Ardres Henry besought the municipality to receive a garrison of Swiss; and proposed that the soldiers should lodge in the faubourgs. The people of Amiens haughtily replied, "that they were able and martial; and could defend their town." Nevertheless, the king sent 25 cannons, with ammunition and gunners, and a message exhorting the townsmen to accept this aid. The *echevins* kept the guns, and demanded the dismissal of the royal cannoniers, and of the Swiss which

formed the escort of the governor of Picardy, M. de St. Paul, who had purposely repaired with his consort to Amiens.[1] During these incidents a person named Dumoulin, banished by his fellow-citizens for dishonest trading, conceived the design of betraying the city to the Spaniards. He had observed, though vigilant watch was maintained by night, that during the day the citizens, confiding in their number and strength, posted only a few sentinels at their gates; moreover, that, emboldened by exemption from attack, no plan was organized to call a sudden muster of men if necessary for defence. Dumoulin obtained audience of Don Tello de Portocarrero, governor of Dourlens; to whom he proposed his scheme. The project was eagerly espoused by Don Tello, who despatched Dumoulin with letters to the viceregal council at Brussels, with an especial commendation by himself of the enterprise addressed to the archduke; and asking for an aid of 4,000 men only, to effect the capture. The cardinal-archduke likewise approved a scheme, the issue of which, probably, would promote peace between the hostile crowns, and therefore hasten the pacification of Flanders, and his union with Doña Isabel. The succour was promised; though no intimation of the intended attempt was made to the cabinet of Madrid, which continued the course of its slow negotiations with father Calatagirone. Secret orders were transmitted by the viceregal council to the governors of the neighbouring strongholds enjoining secrecy, and

[1] The obstinacy of the people of Amiens is related by the king in a circular especially addressed to the municipality of Lyons—Lettres Missives, t. 4—Archives de Lyons. Discours du succès de l'entreprise faite par le cardinal Albert d'Autriche en la ville d'Amiens.

obedience to the behests of Don Tello Portocarrero. A corps of 600 cavaliers, 2,000 foot soldiers, two companies of arquebusiers, one company of cuirassiers, and detachments from the regiments of Don Alfonso de Mendoza and Don Augustino de Mexia: the men of the garrison of Ypres; and 500 men drafted from the garrison of Calais, were gradually collected at Orville, and held ready for action, whenever the propitious moment might arise. The stratagem by which the troops gained entrance into Amiens was devised by Don Tello and by a brave Milanese captain, Juan Baptista d'Ognano. On the night of the 10th of March the troops crept silently forth towards Amiens, under the guidance of the traitor Dumoulin. A body of soldiers was posted near a chapel, a musket-shot from the gate called la Porte de Montescut, ready to give instant support to those who should first gain entrance into Amiens, under the command of two brave officers, Deza and Ortalora. Portocarrero at the head of the infantry took up position behind the Abbaye de la Madelaine, which was about a league from the town; and beyond, in a valley sheltered by trees and hedges, the cavalry under the marquis de Montenegro waited the signal to advance. These ambuscades being duly posted, d'Ognano prepared to execute his stratagem. The attempt was made at eight o'clock, while the principal citizens were attending matins, it being the season of Lent. Fourteen soldiers were disguised as peasants: three of them entered a waggon laden with beans and straw, which a stout Walloon trooper was desired to drive boldly up to the Porte de Montescut. D'Ognano walked at the right of the cart; and Ste Croix, another brave officer, at its left. Behind followed the remainder of the disguised soldiers, some carry-

ing sacks of walnuts, others sacks of apples, on their shoulders. On the driver being challenged, the waggon stopped exactly under the portcullis; at the same time, one of the soldiers stumbled and purposely let fall a sack of walnuts, the contents of which rolled forth. While the soldiers of the citizens, jeering at the awkwardness of the supposed peasant, were busy scrambling for the booty, d'Ognano fired a pistol, the signal for the soldiers in ambuscade near the gate to rush forth. The soldiers then cast aside their disguise and fell upon the city guard. The men fought valiantly; while the sentinel at the top of the gate let fall the portcullis, which was arrested in its descent by the waggon. The citizens, utterly unprepared for this attack, swarmed forth from every quarter of the town: the belfries summoned all to arms; and a fierce fight ensued in the vicinity of the captured gate, in which d'Ognano was slain. Don Tello de Portocarrero and the marquis de Montenegro, meanwhile, appeared with the reserve body of 2,000 men to support the combatants. The burghers, many of whom armed themselves in their panic with the first weapons they could snatch from their houses, were soon repulsed with slaughter. "These said inhabitants," wrote Henry to Montmorency, "forgot their previous grand boast, that if 2,000 Spaniards obtained entrance into their town, they were powerful and valiant enough to put them to the rout; for everyone seemed only anxious to defend his house and to lock his door."[1] The streets of Amiens were speedily lined with Spanish troops; while the cavalry of the enemy mustered in the principal square.

[1] Au Connétable. Bibl. Imp. MS. F. de Bèth.—Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4.

Pillage was strictly forbidden; and every delinquent caught in the act was shot. The belfries were next silenced; and the citizens summoned to lay down arms. The count de St. Paul, having been deprived even of his guard by the jealous folly of the people, was compelled, during these transactions, to quit Amiens to obtain succour; with which he hoped to recapture the town, during its subsequent pillage, while military discipline, as he supposed, would be relaxed.[1] The countess heroically volunteered to remain in Amiens, lest the departure of her husband might be construed into ignominious flight. Portocarrero, however, once master of Amiens, maintained strict discipline: he first placed the burghers under contribution; and then gallantly posted a guard round the abode of madame de St. Paul. He next despatched an express to advertise the archduke of his surprising success; and prayed for men to augment the garrison of Amiens—"as it is not to be supposed that a hero like Le Béarnnois will let us sup in peace in this his chief frontier place of Picardy."[2]

Five hours after the arrival of intelligence of the fall of Amiens, "the hero" had quitted his Louvre, his mistress, and the joyous revels of the capital, for the hard duties of the camp. On the king and on Rosny depended the organization of the measures adopted. The courtiers were paralysed with fear and grief. Paris lay open for the advance of a Spanish army; there was an empty exchequer, and the prospect of angry

[1] Henry said, "Que M. de St. Paul avoit l'esprit aussi bouché que ses oreilles; et que sa grande surdité le rendoit presqu' incapable d'entendre autres choses que les trompes et les cors de chasse."

[2] Davila, lib. 15. Bentivoglio, lib. 4. De Thou, liv. 17.

feuds between his majesty's superintendent of finance and the new Conseil de Raison, as to the levy of funds. The knowledge that many towns which had submitted before the apparently invincible fortune of the king, were still Spanish in sentiment; while it was apprehended that the dukes de Joyeuse, Epernon, and perhaps Mayenne himself, might, on the slightest reverse, forsake the banner of Bourbon—were the terrible anticipations which agitated the late gay and brilliant revellers of the hôtel Montmorency. The constable seems not to have been present at his post at the early council holden previous to Henry's departure. Murmurs, meantime, pervaded the Louvre against Gabrielle d'Estrées, who was accused of having detained the king by her blandishments in voluptuous inaction, to the ruin of the kingdom, and of the courtiers specially. "The king would rather lose Picardy, than behold a tear dim the eyes of his mistress!" was the comment of many an intended fugitive or traitor. The most ardent of the worshippers of madame Gabrielle now reviled the presumption of their late patroness, in daring to raise her aspirations to the diadem. Sancy, Epernon, and others of the more prominent opponents of La Marquise, aggravated her position by expressions of contemptuous compassion. So menacing even in the space of a few hours did these indications become, that the king deemed it wiser for Gabrielle to retire to Monceaux. Accordingly, an hour before the king quitted Paris, she was safely escorted from the capital in a closed litter. Satires and verses attacking madame de Monceaux were published during the next ten days of suspense. A pamphlet, afterwards circulated, appeared, entitled, "*Les Regrets et vie de la Duchesse de Beaufort en l'an*

1597 *lors de la prise d'Amiens, quand le mauvais succès des affaires du roy sembloit menacer ladite duchesse d'un disgrace.*"[1] This document is written in the form of a fictitious autobiography, in which Gabrielle is made to accuse herself of infamous crimes, and to bewail her apparent overthrow. The dark cloud, however, passed away: the court inclined more assiduously than ever before the favourite, who possessed the power and prerogatives of a queen. Her boldest traducers made recantation; or gave large sums to madame de Sourdis, or to madame de Balagny to intercede, that the saloons of the hôtel Schomberg might be opened again to them—a banishment which carried exclusion from the private circle of the Louvre,—and again Gabrielle was drawn in her golden car through the beautiful avenues of the park of Monceaux, the king walking by her side, followed by the élite of the courtiers, bareheaded.

The first military act of the king was to strengthen the garrisons of Corbie and Picquigni, towns on the river Somme, the one above Amiens, the other below the town, so that a blockade of the river was at once commanded by the holder of these places. The king proceeded direct to Pontoise, where despatches awaited him containing details of the catastrophe, the which Henry forwarded to the constable.[2] The following day Henry entered Beauvais, everywhere tranquillizing by his presence, which was hailed

[1] Bibl. de l'Arsenal—Recueil Conrart, vol. 6, p. 93, MS.

[2] To this despatch Villeroy, who accompanied the king, added the following note: "Monseigneur, plus nous advancons nous trouvons la confirmation de notre perte, et la trouvons grande. Le roi a tant de courage qu'il en fournit a tout le monde; mais si nous ne sommes secourus d'hommes, d'argent, et de munitions de guerre, notre cas ira mal. Je vous escrirai tous les jours."

as the precursor of victory. The greatest depression, nevertheless, prevailed: the majesty of the crown seemed sullied. The Roman Catholics of the realm were lukewarm, sullen, and querulous: the Protestants resentful at the refusal of their demands for perfect equality and toleration; and indignant at the scandals of the court. Yet Henry's subjects professing the reformed faith alone had endured these abuses without stirring protest; so fearful were they lest the king, wearied at the cabals surrounding him, might ask the hand of the Infanta, and obtain that princess in marriage, with the Chambers of Inquisition for her dowry.

A portion of the hate and jealousy bestowed on Rosny was visited on his royal master. The key of the treasure-coffers of the realm had hitherto been accessible to the favoured few, who ruled the court by virtue of rank and traditional claims. No inquisition had been made into the methods of farming the finances during the late reign—profound discontent was therefore evoked by the new order introduced by Henry and his rigid minister. Neither was Henry's faithful ally, queen Elizabeth, enthusiastic as of yore in his behalf. The recantation of the king; and pique that Henry persisted in employing the succours sent from England as his majesty himself deemed most serviceable to his cause, instead of adhering to the *programme* sketched by the queen in council, had angered Elizabeth. The rumours of Henry's intended alliance with Gabrielle d'Estrées; his late dissension with her ambassador, Sir Anthony Mildmay; and profound distrust of the negotiations commenced by the holy see with Spain, and sanctioned by the king, in defiance, as Elizabeth observed, of the spirit of the treaty offensive and defensive

concluded between their crowns, were likewise sources of alienation. Henry's ready pen, invincible courage, and sagacity, when driven to action, grappled with and vanquished most obstacles. In the moment of peril no weakness of resolve, inertness, or military incapacity afforded his foes opportunity to compass the ruin of the realm. Like his ancestor, Francis I., on leaving the chambers of the Louvre, Henry cast from him the seduction of royal pleasures: no record exists of enervating dissipations being tolerated in camp. On the call of duty or glory Henry rose in vigorous freedom. "I may cover with my royal robe the trusty armour worn at Coutras, Arques, and Ivry; but I never lay it aside"—was a frequent *mot* of the king. For a period—the early portion of Henry's sojourn at the Louvre—his courtiers and people scoffed at this royal declaration: soon, however, they understood and appreciated their monarch. The marshal de Biron immediately invested Amiens with 3,000 men, a force sufficient to stay the advance of hostile reinforcements until the king, at the head of his army, could besiege the place. The first act of the new masters of Amiens was to burn the faubourgs, in which stood the Abbaye de St. Jean, a wealthy and magnificent monastery; and to fortify its site, which commanded the town. The archduke, anxious to retain so precious a conquest, despatched the condé del Arco to Portocarrero, with assurances of his speedy arrival. He also sent reinforcements to Dourlens, which town Biron attacked, and unfortunately failed to capture, as his scaling ladders proved too short. Henry personally inspected the towns on the frontier; and even appeared before the gates of Arras, to the terror of the garrison. The king writes cheer-

fully to his numerous correspondents, though he complains of excessive fatigue and indisposition. To Duplessis Mornay, who offered to join the camp, the king writes:—"I shall be truly glad to see you; if you could only witness my present position, I am worse served than when I was king of Navarre. Nobody helps me: the burden is heavy."[1] Mornay had never once set his foot in the Louvre: his veneration and love for his old master were not strong enough to balance his reprobation of Henry's change of faith. The cordiality of his intercourse with the king had therefore decreased; and Mornay, in his gloomy retreat at Saumur, now took lead in all the movements of the French Protestants; and had become a chief oracle in their synods. The health of the king began to fail amid these toils and labours. A severe attack of the malady to which he was constitutionally subject,[2] attended by an additional and dangerous symptom, compelled the king during the month of April to return to Paris and put himself under the medical treatment of La Rivière, his first physician. Villeroy, the minister most trusted next to Rosny, met his majesty at Montdidier, and receiving the royal instructions, continued to carry them out with his usual ability. All things being now in preparation for the great siege contemplated, except the money requisite to endow the campaign with success, Henry arrived at St. Germain; from whence, after a conference with Rosny, he repaired to Monceaux.

The financial scheme, which was to deliver Amiens, and rescue his beloved master from anxiety, meantime

[1] Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 2.

[2] The king suffered from severe attacks of Nephritis.

cost the zealous Rosny nights of toil and anxiety. The Conseil de Raison, bewildered by the mis-statements, and by the impossibility of procuring accurate returns, was already at the point of dissolution. Gondy, and the duke de Montpensier, sent a deputation to ask the aid of M. de Rosny in auditing the accounts laid before them; and in rating the amount of new taxes to be imposed on a part of Languedoc for the improvement of the revenue of the coming quarter. Rosny, however, excused himself; the burden of collecting the half of the revenue, he said, demanded all his leisure and attention. The members next petitioned the king to command the attendance of his able superintendent of finance. Henry accordingly promised the presence of Rosny—making a dry comment expressive of his surprise that the aid of a minister whose abilities it was the fashion to rate so low, should be required. The members of the new council were willing to submit to the rebuke, provided that Rosny was sent, to deliver them from the greedy appropriations and contradictory statements of their *employés*. Rosny accordingly attended the next session of the council: the accounts were spread before him, and his advice eagerly demanded. The new tax *du sou pour livre* could not be levied; riots had occurred in several towns to resist the impost, which pressed with severity on the small retail dealers, who gave the tax the sobriquet of La Pancarte. A deficit of six millions was therefore at once acknowledged from the magnificent statement upon which the financial reforms had been calculated by the Notables of Rouen. Rosny looked grave: declared that he could suggest no remedy; and by a process of subtle cavil, for which he afterwards became renowned, so involved matters that he left those

"clever financiers" more bewildered than ever. Shortly afterwards the members of the Conseil de Raison resigned their functions, "finding it impossible to extricate the finances; and unable to sift and detect the subterfuges of peculators." Henry gladly accepted the resignation of these his self-created ministers; and then appointed M. de Rosny sole superintendent of finance, all other officers being declared his subordinates.

To renovate the finances so as to enable the king to undertake a glorious campaign Rosny proposed six methods, each one being capable of bringing in a considerable sum to the exchequer:—A loan from the clergy, to be repaid within two years with interest; the creation of four new counsellors in every high court, and of two counsellors of the treasury; to appropriate for half a year the interest on the sums advanced to the state during the last reign; to increase the *gabelle* at the rate of a *sou* the half-mine of salt; to raise the harbour dues and river tolls throughout the realm; and, lastly, to borrow the sum of one million two hundred thousand livres from the wealthy municipalities of the realm; and to assign, for the gradual liquidation of the debt with interest, the proposed augmentation of duties on salt, by edict of the parliament. Rosny recommended his royal master to avail himself slowly, and only on contingencies of vital importance, of any one or more of these expedients. For the raising of regiments for the pending campaign, the genius of Rosny came to the aid of Villeroy, secretary of war. The provinces of Normandy, Orléanois, Touraine, Isle de France, with Berry, Languedoc, etc., were each to furnish a regiment of 1,500 men, the cost to be defrayed by the province which was to give its name to the regiment,

and the authorities of which were to nominate to all commissions. Henry, who had believed himself involved in hopeless financial difficulties, expressed his thanks in the warmest terms of eulogy. The king then held a privy-council, composed of the dukes de Montpensier, Montmorency, Mayenne, and Bellegarde, the marshals d'Ornano, de Biron, and Fervaques, MM. de la Luc, Roquelaure, and de Frontenac. The omission, purposely made by his majesty, of the name of M. de Sancy, first advertised the latter of the final declension of his favour. The scheme being discussed, and approved by the privy-councillors, was next submitted by Henry to a council-general of his chief nobles, and principally of the members of the defunct Conseil de Raison. Henry then indicated his choice of means amongst the various sources for raising the revenue mentioned by his zealous minister. The king declared his intention of asking a loan of 1,200,000 livres from the wealthy municipalities of the realm; and of creating additional counsellors in the sovereign courts: these resources, with the augmentation of the *gabelles*, and the escheats of dishonest peculators, would replenish the exchequer. Rosny's plan was approved; but the influence of the minister was deprecated. Schomberg and Sancy ventured some cavil—when Henry passionately interposed, and addressing Rosny, his majesty commanded him to frame the edicts, and bring them for the sign-manual, that they might be at once presented to the parliament of Paris.[1] To that august body, therefore, the malcontents of the council looked for the furtherance of their political intrigues, and their malevolence towards M. de

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 9ème. De Thou. Journal de Henri IV. Mathieu, liv. 2.

Rosny. The king with his own hand presented these mandates to the Chambers; so anxious was his majesty for their unanimous acceptance. The address of the king was, as usual, sparing of words. Henry went to expose the malady of the state, and to suggest the appropriate remedy. His speech, nevertheless, was hopeful, and expressed confidence in the military measures already accomplished. "I have fortified the lowlands of the frontier. I was received with jubilee; and, messieurs, when I heard the cries of 'vive le roy!' the thought occurred, like the sharp stroke of a poniard, that perhaps I might be compelled to abandon to their own resources such loyal subjects."[1] Henry implored the Chambers to grant him an army by their unanimous acceptance of his financial decrees; and promised to give his life, if necessary, for the rescue of the realm. Henry then returned to the Louvre; when the harass and excitement of repeated conferences caused a recurrence of the symptoms under which the king suffered on his return from the frontier; and during the next few days absolute rest was enjoined by the royal physicians.

During this interval the Chambers discussed and caballed. The financial innovations were intensely distasteful, especially the proposed increase of officers in the high courts, which expedient diminished the dignity and salaries of the remainder. Money, nevertheless, was imperatively demanded for the rescue of the monarchy. The capture of Amiens might be followed by a sixth Spanish invasion—a contingency more than probable, judging

[1] Ce que le Roy a dit et MM. du Parlement le 13 Avril, 1597, à Paris—Xivrey, Lettres Missives. Valory—Journal Militaire de Henri IV.

by the elation of the viceregal court, and the movement of troops to the frontier. 'The easy good-nature of the king, who had never exercised his prerogative of commanding the registration of a financial edict, encouraged the senators to make steady opposition to the measure, though without suggesting a substitute. This conduct was bitterly felt by Henry. The king beheld his plans suspended, his enlistment of troops retarded, and the enemy encouraged to still more audacious enterprises by the financial crisis which had been anticipated. Many noble personages cheerfully presented sums to the treasury; amongst whom were the Constable, the duke de Mayenne, and Gabrielle d'Estrées. The wealth and valour of some amongst the *noblesse*, and the love and devotion of the peasantry of France, were the support of Henry's throne: from the middle-class of his subjects his majesty too frequently encountered illiberality and disaffection. The first president de Harlay, at the end of four sessions, demanded audience of the king to expose the objections of his loyal Chambers. On the 23rd of April the deputation repaired to the Louvre, and was introduced into the royal chamber, the king being yet too weak to rise from his bed. Henry listened to the harangue of de Harlay with unconcealed irritation. "What!" exclaimed his majesty, with petulance, "is my parliament about to imitate the fools of Amiens, who refused to pay 2,000 crowns for the maintenance of a garrison, and have now been mulcted in two millions? I am weary of this contest; I will myself lead my troops, and end, if possible, this burdensome life of mine." The first president made reply, alluding to the office of the High Court, which, he said, was vigilantly to hold the

scales of Justice, for which the members were responsible to God and to the nation. "M. le president, you arrogate an importance which appertains not to your court. You are delegated by me, the king—I am the delegate of the Most High!"[1] The king, without further parley, dismissed the deputation; counselling the members to restrain from factious opposition to a measure he deplored, but which was nevertheless indispensable for the preservation of the realm. Throughout the remainder of the month angry contentions prevailed; the Chambers gave a decree branding with infamy the name of every noble and wealthy commoner who did not tender personal and pecuniary service to the king for the reconquest of Amiens—a proclamation which excited mirth at the alacrity with which the Chambers imposed the burden on others which it attempted so strenuously to evade.[2] The preachers of Paris, meanwhile, essayed the old *rôle* of factious addresses from the pulpit, trying again to inflame public animosity against the Huguenots, who, under the patronage of Madame, had assembled in great numbers in Paris. These turbulent priests were soon silenced by the arm of the law; and by the aid of the cardinal legate, who suspended several individuals, and temporarily closed their churches. An attempt also was made to organize again the old council of Seize, in order to petition king Philip "to order his victorious army to march from Amiens upon Paris!" The authorities, however, gaining intelligence of the treasonable cabal, the members

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1597. Mezerai—Grande Histoire. Le Grain—Décade de Henri le Grand.

[2] Ibid.

were arrested in a tavern in the rue Huchette. The provost of Paris, advertised of the intended meeting, took possession of the adjacent chamber, and after noting down the seditious debate which ensued, arrested all these demagogues, as they were retiring after having drunk to the health of his catholic majesty. Seven of the leaders were hanged at Montfaucon at dawn on the following morning; and the rest of the prisoners banished, after being punished by the whip and the forfeiture of their patrimony.[1] This wholesome example fortunately arrested the treasonable intrigues of the disaffected.

The arrival of the young duke de Bar at St. Germain en Laye restored a festive aspect to the court. Henry was resolved no longer to delay the betrothment of his sister, whose despondency at the rupture of her engagement with M. de Soissons had destroyed the pleasant intercourse which formerly subsisted between them. The conduct of the king towards Madame is defended by his admiring devotees, who hold that, because Henry suffered his sister to have *le prêche* in Paris, he thereby demonstrated the height of fraternal devotion. There was, nevertheless, cruel persistency in denying to Madame Catherine the husband of her choice. During the wars of the League, and the prevalent belief in the illegitimacy of the infant Condé, political reasons

[1] Ibid. The viscount de Tavannes was also implicated, and was arrested by Vitry, and conveyed to the Bastille. The king, however, pardoned Tavanne's disloyalty; upon which the following irreverent *mot* was circulated: "Que le roy ressembloit aux singes, qui ne baisoit que ceux qui les battoient!" Henry was accused with some truth of neglecting his friends, in his desire to recompense and gain even his enemies.

doubtless forbade that union, in addition to the very visible disaffection shown by M. de Soissons for the royal cause. Henry was now established on his throne; the birth of Condé was pronounced legitimate; and his majesty had formed the resolve, *coûte que coûte*, on the termination of the war with Spain to espouse his mistress, and to recognize César-Monsieur as dauphin of France. The count de Soissons had latterly shown himself little at court, and lived in retirement at his château de Maillé. This passive attitude Henry, however, was pleased to designate as sullen; the king, moreover, was angry at the half-acquiescence given by M. de Soissons to the edict which established the young nephew of the latter in the privileges of heir-presumptive. As the relations between Henry and his sister had become embarrassing, the king, being urgently solicited at this important crisis by the duke de Lorraine to seal their treaty of amity by close alliance, resolved that the espousals of Madame should no longer be delayed. The princess still steadily declined to change her faith; nevertheless, the head of the catholic and most orthodox house of Lorraine beheld, in his anxious desire to propitiate king Henry, no obstacle to the conclusion of the marriage! It was asserted that the princess would yield and recant: the king apparently believed so, as he gave no heed to the tears and solicitations of his sister, "that he would not force her to a marriage with a prince so devoted to the Romish faith as M. de Bar, but rather suffer her to retire to Béarn."[1] The king replied that M.

[1] "Il n'a qu'une sœur," writes the sarcastic duchess de Rohan, "ne l'a-t-il pas offerte à cinq ou six princes en même temps, en mandant à l'un: Venez me trouver, je vous donnerai ma sœur; à l'autre, Faites faire la paix par ceux de votre

de Soissons was orthodox; and, moreover, that Madame had written to Pope Clement, under her own sign-manual, offering to change her faith, provided that the holy father would bring about her marriage with M. le Comte! That fatal letter, written by Madame in a fit of wild passion—probably at the dictation of madame de Guiche, who at that period recoiled at nothing to embarrass and annoy the king—ever haunted the princess, and was unjustifiably used to goad her to make abjuration. It was, moreover, represented to Madame that her late suitor, Montpensier, was likewise orthodox; and that she had then made no objection to the faith of the duke, on the promise of the latter to permit her freedom of conscience in religious matters. Madame wept, and replied that both MM. de Soissons and de Montpensier were princes of the blood, her brother's subjects, and responsible to him for her treatment. "Was madame Renée de France duchesse de Ferrara happier, or protected from persecution, though daughter of Louis XII., and sister-in-law and aunt of successive kings of France?" Madame's chief hope of deliverance from this alliance arose from her knowledge of the intolerance of Rome; for she believed that the pope would steadily decline to grant a dispensation which might hereafter graft on the orthodox stock of Lorraine a germ of heresy. The duke de Bar was a young cavalier of some military repute; his renown, however, chiefly consisted in the skill with which he had conducted several forays on the lands of the late duchess de

partie, je vous donnerai ma sœur; à l'autre, Gardez moi votre province favorable, je vous donnerai ma sœur! O Prince vraiment politique! ne savez-vous pas que les paroles sont femelles et les effets mâles?"—Apologie pour le roy Henri IV.

Bouillon, whose maiden favour he sought to win by the rude stroke of the gauntlet, in default of more persuasive methods; and for his disaffection after the battle of Arques, which gave the first blow to the cause of the Holy Union. The duke was bigoted in his devotion to the church; vacillating and inconsistent; and always professed himself, in company, when conversing on secular affairs, of the opinion of the last speaker. He desired the alliance of Madame because her dower was noble, and her hand the guarantee of king Henry's favour. The duke was received with honour by the king, who rode forth to meet him in the park of St. Germain. Madame greeted her august suitor with dignity; but soon after made pretext to quit St. Germain for her own hôtel in Paris, where, on the following day, Sunday, May 9th, she attended *le prêche*, "that it should not be said she was about to abandon her faith, to become duchess de Lorraine." The king, on his return to Paris, frequently showed himself to the people, who were admitted to see his majesty play at tennis in a court of the Louvre called La Sphère. Madame de Monceaux was generally present, seated in a low gallery which overlooked this court. The king, to familiarize the people with the extraordinary honour paid to her, conversed with Gabrielle publicly, and was often seen to kiss her hand; "but for all this," says the chronicler, "his majesty attentively watched the preparations making to enable him to besiege Amiens." Rosny's arduous duties were bravely persevered in: the loan demanded from the chief towns of the realm had been cheerfully responded to, for the security offered on *les gabelles* was deemed satisfactory. Certain personages guilty of notorious malversations spontaneously offered partial restitu-

tion, and by this means a sum of 1,200,000 livres was rescued. The parliament of Paris, nevertheless, continued its opposition to the creation of fresh charges in the courts of the realm. In vain Montmorency[1] and Cheverny harangued, and stated that the necessity of the kingdom must compel his majesty to command the registration of the edict, which he had trusted to owe to the loyal patriotism of the High Court. The more flippant of the members accused Montmorency of anxiety to preserve the royal favour; as for the chancellor, they said, it was notorious that he sealed every document presented by madame de Sourdis! The constable, therefore, reported his ill success to his majesty; and advised the king to cause the registration of the edicts in question to be made in his presence. "Mon compère," wrote Henry in return, "I am grieved to learn that Messieurs de la Cour have again proved themselves fools. As it is necessary that I should appear, I will do so; preferring to present myself ten times if requisite, rather than to lose France."[2] On the 20th of May the king went down to La Chambre Dorée from the Louvre. It was the first time that Henry had there appeared, in sovereign state. The countenance of the king clouded as he surveyed the ranks of his mutinous senate. "Messieurs! it is with extreme regret

[1] In a philippic very popular at this season the constable was apostrophized in these two lines:

"Mais, suis né sous une planette,
Pour n'être que Marionette!"

Montmorency was accused of paying blind obedience to the royal behests.

[2] Bibl. Imp. MS. F. de Béthune 9061, fol. 27—Lettres Missives, t. 4.

that I appear in my parliament for the first time on my present mission. It would have been far more agreeable to me to hold *un lit de justice* to admonish you on your duties; and to commend to your care your consciences and my own. I am now compelled to rebuke you for your procrastinations, obstinacy and disobediences, which have endangered the state—though my previous representations seem not to have moved your loyal fervour. I am transported with such zeal for the rescue of the realm, that now perhaps I might comment too severely on your negligences—my chancellor, therefore, will declare to you my royal will and intention."[1] Cheverny then in the name of his majesty directed the registration of the edicts—which was performed accordingly, under protest of MM. de la Cour, in the presence of his majesty.

On the 4th of June Henry departed to visit Biron's camp before Amiens. He found admirable order and enthusiasm everywhere. The besieging army daily increased; and the nobles and gentry from all parts of France flocked to repel betimes the threatened invasion. Many *sorties* had been made by the garrison, which under Portocarrero bravely sustained the siege; being at the same time compelled to defend itself from the hostile attacks of the people of Amiens. Portocarrero, whose valour is renowned, was a man of small stature, but quick, dextrous, and of great resource.[2] His addresses inspirited his

[1] Allocution au Parlement de Paris—Bibl. Imp. MS. F. Dupuy MS. 407, fol 23. Lettres Missives—Serieys Lettres Inédites de Henri IV.

[2] "Portocarrero disait que les trois plus grands capitaines qu'il connoissait, étoient Henri pour la conduite d'une grande armée; le duc de Mayenne pour le siège; et le maréchal de Biron pour la bataille."—Mathieu, t. 2.

soldiery to endure the incessant assaults of a powerful enemy, when hope of succour remotely depended on a victory to be won by the cardinal archduke over Henri Quatre.

Henry established the royal quarters on the banks of the Somme, between the lines drawn by Biron round the town and the abbey of La Magdelaine. The science shown by Biron in the construction of the fortifications erected, including a bridge thrown across the Somme, was highly lauded by his majesty; who, to gratify the marshal, suffered him to retain the title of commander-in-chief of the besieging army. The army now consisted of 12,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. Queen Elizabeth, in accordance with the terms of the treaty offensive and defensive, sent a body of 4,000 English soldiers; which welcome succour had arrived in camp.[1] The Dutch, moreover, sent Henry an aid of men and ammunition. The small Spanish garrison shut up in Amiens could do little, therefore, but hold out against this overwhelming force. Henry waited the advance of the archduke; and as his majesty foresaw that the blockade would be long, and the danger small, he resolved to summon madame de Monceaux to dissipate the tedium of his sojourn in camp. The greatest

[1] Elizabeth, however, seized the opportunity again to torment the king relative to the cession of Calais or Brest. The king wrote to his ambassador in Rome, the duke de Piney, "Il semble que mes voisins desqu'ils je me suis toujours promis plus d'assistance ne soient marrys de ma peine, esperant peut-être profiter de ma necessité, et principalement la royne d'Angleterre, laquelle veut maintenant à luy quitter Calais, le reprenant, devant que de me secourir davantage. Mes sujets de la nouvelle religion font plus les facheux que devant, s'étant saisis de mes deniers aux lieux de receptes ou ils sont maitres." —Lettres Missives, t. 4.

abundance and order there reigned, owing to the provident management of Villeroy and Rosny. Rigid military order was maintained by the duke de Mayenne, who acted as camp-master; and who excelled in offices requiring routine and method. Luxuries were to be obtained before Amiens for smaller price than the cost of common food, when the royal army invested Rouen—a fact which proclaimed the prosperous advance of the country. "Provisions were not dearer in the camp at Amiens, than in the city of Paris," says Le Grain. "There were markets established for the sale of wheat, bread, fruit, and herbs; there were shambles, and a fish-market; and sales of wine, barley, bread, oats, and hay. Even the tavern-keepers and cooks of Paris found employment in camp. There was a fixed tariff for the sale of every commodity, which might not be transgressed. There were plenty of apothecaries and surgeons, hospitals and a cemetery. The sick were supplied with every alleviation—in short, every one declared that a new city of Paris had been raised before the walls of Amiens."

About the middle of June Henry paid a visit to Paris, to arrange with Rosny for the monthly transport of funds to the camp for the payment of the soldiers. It was agreed that Villeroy should with his own hands distribute their pay to the soldiers, to guard against peculation; and to redress grievances by a prompt reference to Mayenne. Henry found his versatile subjects of Paris immersed in theological debate, arising from a series of sermons being preached by Du Perron, bishop of Evreux, in the parish church of St. Méry, on the traditions of the church; and the insufficiency of holy scripture as the sole rule of faith. The pretext for these

harangues was the renunciation of the so-called reformed heresy, by the flippant scoffer Sancy; who feeling that his court favour had vanished, resorted, it is supposed, to an abjuration[1] in order to regain influence. Henry wrote also to Mornay, to announce that he had appointed Schomberg, in addition to other commissioners nominated to hear and record the grievances of the Huguenots of the realm; who were then holding synod at Vendôme, and demonstrating disaffection. The king bitterly complained that his late co-religionists sought by every means to embarrass his government; and refused to give him credit for the most liberal intentions towards themselves so soon as the pacification of the realm permitted of religious concession.

Henry returned to his camp at the end of June. On the eighth day of July Gabrielle d'Estrées arrived, and was received by his majesty with royal honour, the troops presenting arms. The king had prepared a surprise for his mistress—one flattering to her ambition, and suggestive of the elevation to which she was destined. Gabrielle was again *enceinte:* and the king's chagrin was intense, that he could not legalize the birth of her expected offspring by immediate marriage. Queen Marguerite was still perversely contentious on the conditions of her divorce; besides, the see of Rome required long wooing, and made special stipulation before performing the

[1] Sancy was absolved in public, in the chapel of the late Jesuit College, rue St. Antoine, by the cardinal legate. During the ceremony the sobs of the penitent were audible—some vowed that *laughter* was a more appropriate term. The cardinal legate exclaimed, "You hear this poor gentleman lamenting his past errors, his heart is so full of grief that he cannot speak!" Henry laughed, and said, "Qu'il ne falloit plus a Sancy que le Turban!"

welcome office of unloosing a hateful matrimonial bond. After the arrival of madame de Monceaux Henry signed letters patent, which he despatched by express to the parliament of Paris, creating "his well-beloved and trusty subject madame la Marquise de Monceaux, duchesse de Beaufort, with remainder to her son César, and his heirs for ever." The estate and lordship of Beaufort in Champagne were likewise settled on the new duchess. The king pleads the singular affection which he bore towards the two said personages, as a motive to induce the Chambers to proceed to the immediate registration of the decree —a request at once obeyed. The patent is countersigned by Villeroy.[1]

The duchesse de Beaufort, as was thenceforth Gabrielle's appellation, was attended by a train of ladies, amongst whom were mesdames de Sourdis, Balagny, and Sagonne. Gabrielle, nevertheless, had declined in popularity: her beauty, kind heart, and exemplary deportment failed to allay the fierce jealousies which her position fostered. The great ladies of the court, obliged to pay homage to the duchess, or to retire to their castles, misconstrued every act of the latter, however simple. If madame de Beaufort promised to solicit a favour, and obtained it, as was generally the case, her ungrateful petitioners made coarse comment on her favour; if, on the contrary, the duchess refused her intercession and dismissed her interested visitor, the Louvre rang with exaggerated relations of her insolence and presumption. The presence of the duchess in camp provoked much comment; and it is recorded by some chroniclers

[1] Anselme—Hist. Généalogique des Grands Officiers de la Couronne, etc., t. 4. The decree is signed, 8ème de Juillet, au camp devant Amiens.

that Biron presumed to remonstrate on the evil example, and on the license thereby given to the foreign soldiery and others, to indulge in ribald jests at the expense of royalty. Madame de Beaufort, however, remained in camp, her tent surmounted by the ensign of the *fleurs de lis*, until towards the end of August; when the advance of the Spanish army, and the probability of a pitched battle, compelled her to retire to the château de Cœuvres.

The months of July and August were consumed in skirmishes, and forays on the part of the royal troops over the frontier. The invincible valour of Portocarrero also repulsed many assaults from Henry's cavaliers. The Spaniards disputed every inch of ground with matchless intrepidity; and put thousands of Henry's troops to the sword. The dearth, meantime, raged; while its terrible colleague, pestilence, increased the despair of the people of Amiens, who were watched by the Spaniards, and remorselessly decapitated if detected in parley, or collusion with the soldiery of their king. On the 2nd of September a bloody conflict ensued, in which Portocarrero was slain. The marquis de Montenegro then assumed the command, which he bravely exercised until the termination of the siege.

Negotiations for peace, meantime, continued through the mediation of the pope. After the arrival in camp of madame de Beaufort, the Franciscan Calatagirone[1] was received in several private audiences by the king. The recent mission of the reverend father to the court of Philip II. formed the subject of conference. Calatagirone represented king Philip

[1] Bonaventura Calatagirone, General of the Franciscan order, a Sicilian by birth. Clement the VIII. eventually created him Patriarch of Constantinople.

as being anxious for peace; concerned at the capture of Amiens, which his Catholic majesty protested that he had never enjoined; and eager to make treaty with Henri Quatre—provided that his majesty recognized the government of Albert and Doña Isabel over the Low Countries; and consented to enter into league to uphold throughout Europe the Romish faith. Henry perceived that the Anglican schism was alluded to in Philip's mysterious intimations; and that his faithful ally Elizabeth of England was the potentate to be attacked so soon as his Catholic majesty could sheathe his sword on the Flemish frontier. Henry makes lucid comment on the proposition made him to the duke de Piney-Luxembourg; who had resumed his old post of resident French ambassador in Rome for secular affairs. The king writes[1]—"It is certain that these unfounded rumours of peace injure me greatly with my allies—which I believe to be the aim of my enemies. I found this monk acute, although, as he is in duty bound, most inclined to the cause of my enemy. I have to observe, that it is not so easy for the Spaniards to conquer England as the latter have represented to his holiness; or as the zeal of the pope perhaps hopes. I neither desire, nor can permit, that the Catholic king should add that crown to the many already heaped upon his head The late kings Charles IX. and Henry III. had little affection for the queen of England, and did all they could to put down the reformed faith in this country; the king of Spain had then money in abundance and a better army than he has now; moreover, peace existed between Christendom and the Turks—yet neither the said kings nor the king of Spain, after thirty years' warfare,

[1] Aubery—Hist. du cardinal de Joyeuse, in fol. Paris.

could subjugate the Huguenots of this realm alone. With what colour then can it now be asserted that the king of Spain will be able to conquer England, and to destroy heresy?" Throughout the voluminous political correspondence of Henri Quatre which modern research has brought to light from the archives of European states, the most loyal friendship and fidelity is evinced for queen Elizabeth by the king. If Henry had shown inclination to purchase the alliance of Philip II. after his abjuration, his marriage with the Infanta Doña Isabel, and the sacrifice of his friendship for Elizabeth, would at any moment have dissipated Philip's hostility. The union of the arms of France and Spain for the overthrow of heresy in England, Holland, and Germany, would have realized the ardent aspirations of the papal and Spanish courts. At the close of a long reign, Philip II. perpetrated an act of political fraud, which had effectually crippled his resources, and compelled him to accept the peace, in the negotiation of which he had so long dallied. The king, inconvenienced by the mortgages given on certain branches of his revenue, to defray the cost of his wars in the Low Countries and elsewhere, published about this period an edict, declaring all contracts which fettered his treasury null and void, with the amount of interest due thereon.[1] The sufferers were chiefly Flemish merchants and bankers, who had certainly taken advantage of the king's pecuniary straits to extort exorbitant interest. This dishonest repudiation of his debts was the source of much after embarrassment to the king: when money was needed to carry on the war against France funds were not forthcoming. No merchant would lend,

[1] Grotius, lib. v.—quoted by Watson, Hist. of the reign of Philip II. Cabrera—Vida de Felipe II.

with the probability before him that the Spanish government might confiscate the loan, under pretence that the religious welfare of Christendom was endangered by the liabilities which burdened Philip's exchequer—and such was the cause which had retarded the march of the archduke to relieve Amiens.

The garrison of Amiens meantime was reduced to the last straits, when the cardinal archduke commenced his march. Rigid discipline was maintained; for more than a wild foray across the frontier, with the spoliation of a few defenceless towns, was contemplated. The priestly general was about to attempt conflict with the king; to assail an army flushed with repeated successes; and which believed itself invincible, when the oriflamme waved over its ranks—the token that the Christian king commanded in person. The van of the archduke's army was led by Don Carlos de Coloma, the historian of, as well as one of the chief leaders in, this stormy episode of Flemish history.[1] The centre was commanded by the cardinal viceroy, Don Louis de Velasco, the young prince of Orange, and by the duke d'Aumale—who, although abounding in penitential discourses and letters to his sovereign, yet always contrived to be a chief leader of the hosts sent against his countrymen. The archduke made his first halt at Bertincourt—and prudently sent thence to reconnoitre the royal camp; and to ascertain the position of Montpensier, whose squadrons the viceroy apprehended might attack his rear. The king, meantime, watched the cautious advance of the enemy. It had been resolved in council to await the attack of the Spaniards within the lines—imitating, in this respect, the tactics pursued at Arques. The royal troops, though numerous and valiant, had had little

[1] Lettres Missives, t. 4. Bibl. Imp. F. de Béth. MS. 9061.

experience in the battle-field; while the Spanish army consisted of 25,000 men, the *élite* of the force in Flanders. Moreover, the *prestige* of victory in the field was no longer necessary to the king, so that he should incur the smallest hazard to obtain it: the surrender of Amiens, and the retreat of the archduke, were the solid advantages alone to be desired. Henry, therefore, followed the advice of Mayenne, who, with characteristic timidity, implored his majesty not to venture a combat. The king laughed remembering aforetimes how often he had profited by the panics of the chief of the Holy Union; nevertheless, Henry flattered the duke supremely, by feigning to yield the point, in deference to Mayenne's military sagacity. Albert, meanwhile, while at Bertincourt, sent Calatagirone, general of the Franciscans, to ascertain whether his majesty would be disposed amicably to raise the siege of Amiens, provided that the town was surrendered to the legate, to hold in the name of his holiness, until the pending negotiation terminated? "I will leave you to judge, *mon cousin*," wrote Henry to the constable, "what likelihood existed that I should consent to such a preposterous proposal!" As his enemy approached, numerous despatches testify the energy and excitement of the king; who appears to revel in the anticipation of again encountering the Spanish hosts. He wrote to M. de Soissons requesting him to quit his retreat, and not only aid in "recapturing Amiens, but in defending his country, a thing synonymous."[1] To his sister Henry wrote to tell Madame the successful issue of a skirmish with some squadrons of the enemy's van near to Picquigni. He addresses Rosny, and facetiously tells the latter to repair forthwith to

[1] Serieys—Lettres de Henri IV.

camp, that he may participate in the expected benediction of M. le cardinal d'Autriche.

On Monday, the 15th of September, the Spanish army appeared in battle array, and bore down straight on Henry's intrenchments. A furious cannonade ensued: the enemy, however, halted suddenly; and after a survey crossed the Somme and retreated to a neighbouring eminence, and commenced to throw up intrenchments. Henry thereupon despatched the duke de Mayenne to garrison and fortify the village of Longpré, on the opposite side of the river, and situated between the hostile camp and the town of Picquigni. "If the enemy had seized this village, with its bridge, they might have thrown succour into Amiens: it had not been fortified, because it was believed that the enemy would not dare to cross the river," relates the historian de Thou.[1] Amiens, meantime, was battered by the royal army, the conflict continuing throughout the night. In the hostile camp a council of war was holden: the impregnable position of the French, and the resolve of the king to remain within his intrenchments, were discussed with warmth. Count Mansfeldt, Mendoza, governor of Cambray, and Vega, Spinola, and Texada, valiant officers on the Spanish staff, counselled the archduke to retire, rather than risk the assault of Henry's camp. While the debate was pending a messenger appeared, bringing news of the arrival of the duke de Mayenne in force at Longpré; and of the advance of the divisions under Montpensier from Picquigni. On all sides the Spanish army was menaced; the king was at the head of his troops; while the imprisoned garrison of Amiens might, at any moment, be overpowered and ejected by

[1] Livre 17.

the exasperated citizens. At dawn, therefore, the archduke commenced an inglorious retreat back to Bertincourt, after one more ineffectual effort to lure Henry from his intrenchments. "The enemy," wrote king Henry, "encamped at night close to my village of Arquelles; but three hours before dawn the archduke retreated, without sound of trumpet or drum, and in such dismay that he left behind part of his equipage."[1] The triumph of the king was signal: the very sight of his hosts had sufficed to terrify the enemy, and to compel a retreat—the more humiliating, from its contrast with the ostentation of the archduke's advance. The King, on the unexpected retreat of the Spaniards, gave pursuit. Once the retreating army halted on the heights of Vignacourt, while its leaders deliberated on the expediency of attacking the French columns. The archduke, however, observed, "that an action, even if the result was successful for the Spanish arms, could not be considered as decisive; neither would it rescue the garrison of Amiens: he therefore was of opinion that a return home was politic; especially as intelligence had reached camp that the town of Rhinbourg had fallen before the intrigues of count Maurice."[2] The retreat therefore was continued: the archduke spent two days at Rubempré; and from thence journeyed to Arras.

The duke de Mayenne, meantime, expostulated at the evident longing of the king to pursue and attack the enemy. "Sire," said he, "you have no need to court military glory: we know that M. l'Archiduc could not sustain your onset; a truth of which his

[1] Circulaire sur la retraite du cardinal d'Autriche.—Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 2. Lettres Missives de Henri IV. Berger Xivrey. Bentivoglio, Relationi de la Guerra de Flandra.

[2] Coloma—Hist. Bentivoglio. Davila.

eminence appears likewise profoundly convinced. You have chased this cardinal by the very terror of your renown. Amiens has now no other alternative than to surrender!" Such being the opinion of Montpensier and of Biron, the king retired to Dourlens, and from thence repaired to his camp. On the evening of the 18th of September, 1597, Henry despatched a flag of truce and an officer to parley with the marquis de Montenegro, and to deliver the merciful message, "that his majesty deplored the shedding of Christian blood; and that he prayed the garrison to spare him the affliction of again assaulting the city; for that the retreat of the archduke exonerated the marquis from further defence, and rendered capitulation honourable as inevitable." Montenegro,[1] on the reception of this message, assembled a council of war. The Spaniards in Amiens still numbered 2,000 men; but their ammunition was exhausted; the dearth was excessive; pestilence raged; while the acrimony of the citizens daily endangered the lives of the chieftains. The marquis, therefore, proposed that a passport should be requested to enable two officers to visit the archduke, to receive the orders of his eminence.[2] Henry granted the safe conduct, for his chivalrous generosity was appreciated; and his enemies were emboldened to prefer petitions which their own generals would have rejected. The Conde Paciotto, and major Ortiz, were thereupon despatched to confer with the archduke viceroy at Arras. Albert replied to the

[1] The marquis de Montenegro was a prince of the lineage of Caraffa.

[2] De Thou, liv. 17. Journal de Henri IV. Le Grain Mém. de Cheverny. Aubigné—Hist. Univer., t. 3. Olhagaray, Hist. de Foix et de Béarn.

message of Montenegro, "that he was penetrated by the courage and fidelity of the brave garrison of Amiens, which had given brilliant example to the armies of the Catholic king. Nevertheless, he now exhorted the garrison to treat with the enemy, and to make the most honourable terms in its power."

The complications which enveloped the administration of the viceroy, his desire to establish himself peaceably in the Netherlands, and the little enthusiasm displayed by the Spanish cabinet after the surprise of Amiens, combined to render the archduke anxious to extricate himself from the responsibilities of an enterprise, more glorious than politic. The envoys of the marquis de Montenegro returned to Amiens and delivered their message. Two Spanish gentlemen were then deputed to wait upon Biron, and ascertain the articles likely to be accorded by his majesty. The king conceded the honours of war to the soldiers and officers of the garrison; who were to march from Amiens with banners flying and drums beating. His majesty promised to furnish transport for their arms, baggage, and sick and wounded, as far as Bapâume or Dourlens. He also engaged to respect the graves of their dead; and to permit the tablet erected in the cathedral to the memory of Portocarrero to remain where it had been affixed. Permission was moreover accorded to the marquis de Montenegro to send envoys to advertise the archduke of the signature of the capitulation; the which was to remain suspended during the space of six days, to allow a last chance for the relief of the town by the armies of the viceroy—the king during this interval granting truce to the besieged. The liberality of the king was highly extolled by the Spaniards; "though, truth to say," exclaimed Monte-

negro, "we have made your king, king of Amiens—before, his majesty had no power over his citizens; he was only lord protector of the privileges of this town!" The day following Henry wrote to his faithful servant, Crillon, to apprize him of the termination of the siege of Amiens. This epistle, a tradition of which for long only existed, has now been brought to light by modern industry and research. The spirited words, written however in irony, with which the letter opens, have hitherto been quoted incorrectly, with variations, as inscribed by Henry, after the battle of Arques:—

The King to Monsieur de Crillon.[1]

"Brave Crillon!—Hang yourself for not having been near me on Monday last, at the finest encounter which has ever been seen, or perhaps will ever be witnessed again! Believe me, I wished much for you. The cardinal came to visit us in great fury; but he went back again very sneakingly! I hope on Thursday next to be in Amiens. I shall not long remain inactive, as I have now one of the finest armies imaginable: nothing fails me, but the presence of the brave Crillon, who will always be welcome, and received with favour. A Dieu. This 20th of September, from the camp before Amiens.

"Henry."

As the king remarked, "nothing failed him at the siege of Amiens." His allies were faithful, and his soldiers enthusiastic. The archduke "advanced upon the royal intrenchments like a great captain, and skulked back like a coward!" affording Henry opportunity to display the discipline of his army, and to test the extent of his military *prestige*.

[1] Archives de M. le duc de Crillon—Lettres Missives de Henri IV. Journal Militaire de Henri IV., par Valory.

Money abounded; Rosny made a monthly visit to the camp, taking with him the sum of 1500 crowns, which he paid to Villeroy, who distributed their stipends to the soldiers. A million of crowns thus passed through the hands of Villeroy; whose zeal and dexterity rendered his aid indispensable to the king. The energy and ability of these two ministers, Rosny and Villeroy, combined with admirable devotion, to serve the royal cause at this juncture. Personal affairs were disregarded: during the siege Villeroy lost his wife; and Rosny met with severe pecuniary loss, which his presence on his patrimonial lands might have mitigated. Neither the one nor the other, however, stirred from the post confided to him by his master. "When I consider the immense number of letters which I received from the king during the siege of Amiens, I feel astounded that a prince, burdened with the conduct of a great siege, should yet have found leisure and inclination to busy himself about the internal affairs of his kingdom; and that his genius should have proved elastic enough to legislate with equal ability for the conduct of both."[1] The voluminous correspondence of the king attests Henry's extraordinary versatility of mind. After a letter addressed perhaps to Lesdiguières, sketching an able plan of campaign, and in which the king dilates on the anxieties, military and pecuniary, which beset his mind, an epistle follows—dated the same day—to his ambassador in England, filled with interesting details of the camp and court, for the edification of queen Elizabeth. Other letters often followed; for the king, when once the pen was in

[1] Mém. de Sully, liv. 9ème. Mém. de Villeroy—Cheverny—who both testify to the singular activity, mental and bodily, evinced at this period by king Henry.

his hand, despatched a great deal of business. Missives then perhaps are indited by his majesty, relative to the purchase of jewels or lands for madame la duchesse; or for the transplantation of Béarnnois nectarine trees, from the gardens at Pau to those forming around the Tuileries, or St. Germain. A cordial billet to Montmorency or Roquelaure next meets the eye, in which the king comments pleasantly on familiar topics—such as incidents of the chase, or concerning the stud of horses at Chantilly; and, perhaps, gravely imparts the fact of the birth of a litter of puppies!

During the siege M. de St. Luc, grandmaster of artillery, was slain by a stray cannon ball, as he was conversing within the intrenchments with Villeroy and M. de Montigny. These noblemen repaired to notify the catastrophe to the king, whom they found holding conference in his tent with Rosny. The cavaliers, having condoled with his majesty on the loss of so valiant a servant as M. de St. Luc, both demanded the vacant office of grandmaster—Villeroy for his son, M. d'Alincour, and Montigny for himself. Henry replied by stating his resolve to wait the conclusion of the siege before conferring the office. Subsequently his majesty remarked to Rosny that he disapproved of the proposed candidates: "M. d'Alincour wants stamina; his nails are too pale. Montigny has neither presence of mind nor economy." Henry then asked Rosny whether the duties of grandmaster of artillery were incompatible with those of superintendent of finance; his majesty adding, that he would gladly recompense Rosny's service by the vacant office. Rosny assured the king that the two offices were compatible, and would not interfere the one with the other. Accordingly, he re-

ceived a promise from the king that, on the termination of the siege, his claim should be preferred before that of any other candidate. Great, however, was the disapprobation evinced by the duchess de Beaufort at this arrangement, who wrote to the king, peremptorily demanding the office for her father, the marquis de Cœuvres; who, it is true, held the post of provincial deputy-grandmaster of artillery. The king informed the duchess of his promise to Rosny; and explained that the marquis de Cœuvres was too advanced in years to discharge the arduous office. Gabrielle, nevertheless, persisted; she declared that the claims of her kindred ought first to be considered; and that, being what she was, the indignity would be insufferable, if her father were not preferred to the post vacant by the demise of his chief, M. de St. Luc, grandmaster of artillery. A contest of some duration ensued between the king and his mistress, his majesty refusing to withdraw his promise to Rosny. The duchess then threatened to take the veil at Maubuisson; bidding his majesty eternal farewell. The annoyance felt by the king was intense; but Gabrielle deemed that the honour of her father would suffer by his exclusion from the vacant office; which, moreover, had been ably exercised by her grandfather. Her demand, therefore, was granted, when the king, taking the opportunity of the truce pending the communication of Montenegro with the archduke, paid a hasty visit to the château de Cœuvres, where madame de Beaufort was sojourning. "The king displayed some confusion when he confided his weakness to me," relates M. de Rosny. "His majesty said that he had still provided for my interest; having stipulated that d'Estrées, who was quite incapacitated

from discharging the functions of this office, should resign, and accept the first vacant office under the crown; or, in case of a war, make immediate surrender of the charge of grandmaster." Rosny expressed himself satisfied with this arrangement; he visited the duchess, and congratulated her on the advancement of her father, carefully concealing his disappointment. A few days subsequently the death of Rosny's younger brother placed the appointment of governor of the town of Mantes at his majesty's disposal. Henry immediately despatched letters patent, bestowing the government on Rosny; whilst he sent the latter private assurances of gratitude for the submission which Rosny had evinced for the wishes of "her whom I adore, cherish, and revere miraculously!"

On the 25th of September the truce of six days expired; and as no succour or response was forthcoming from the archduke viceroy, the marquis de Montenegro signified his intention to capitulate. Early, therefore, on the morning of Thursday, September 25th, the constable de Montmorency, the marshal de Biron, and the duke de Montbazon, approached la Porte de Beauvais of the town of Amiens. The batteries on the ramparts were masked, the flag of Spain lowered, and the guard disarmed. Montenegro appeared on horseback, without military uniform, and carrying a small truncheon, in shape like a marshal's baton. He gravely saluted the constable, who presented to the marquis the officers of the escort chosen by his majesty to conduct him to Dourlens. About a league from Amiens the king waited the approach of Montenegro and his officers. Henry was mounted on a charger superbly caparisoned, and was at-

tended by the prince de Conty, and the dukes de Montpensier, Mayenne, Nemours, and Nevers. The royal escort consisted of 1600 men, the *élite* of the French cavalry. Montenegro alighted, and, stooping, kissed the king's boot. "Sire, I deliver to your majesty a town which hitherto has appertained to its citizens, rather than to your crown: you have conquered, and can now dispose of Amiens as your royal wisdom may dictate." Henry graciously responded; and desired the marquis to present his companions, the remnant of the brave garrison of Amiens. This ceremony over, Montenegro continued his progress to the frontier; when, haughtily saluting the French officers of his escort, he took leave. He was followed by a body of 2,000 infantry, and 600 horse; by the sick, wounded, and the women appertaining to the division.[1]

The king made his entry into Amiens at four o'clock on the same afternoon, and proceeded to the cathedral, where a *Te Deum* was chanted. The citizens received his majesty with incredible tokens of gratitude for their deliverance. This enthusiasm was somewhat allayed when it was announced that the charters which had enabled the people of Amiens to show mutinous disregard to the desire of their king, were about to be modified; and a strong garrison established in their town to guard against future surprises. The presumption of the citizens had received severe punishment. Nevertheless, the resolve of the government created factious opposition. The town, however, as Montenegro said, was now Henry's by right of conquest; and the people were compelled to submit. The garrison left by the king consisted of twenty companies of foot, and three squadrons of

[1] De Thou, liv. 18.

cavalry, under M. de Vic, the brave royalist governor of St. Denis during the reign of the Union. The day following the surrender of Amiens a fire broke out in camp, and consumed the royal tent, the beautiful pavilion erected for Gabrielle d'Estrées, and the quarters of the dukes de Montpensier and Mayenne. The conflagration was supposed to originate from an exhibition of fireworks, in camp, in honour of the capitulation of the town. The king, therefore, marched to reconnoitre the town of Dourlens. After sojourning two days in its vicinity, to the terror of the garrison, Henry resolved to return the visit of the archduke, by a sudden advance on Arras, where he was still residing. "I led my army to the very gates of Arras," writes Henry to the constable, "where I remained in battle array for six hours, and fired repeated volleys of cannon into the town. The said cardinal took no notice of my presence,—for which patience the cardinal deserves commendation; as he was aware that my purpose was to fight, and not to stare at the steeples of Arras, in imitation of his foray upon Amiens. One of my troopers who was in Arras, in attendance upon the General of the Franciscans, informs me that though my arrival excited great commotion and panic, it was reported that the cardinal did not leave his closet."[1] After this *bravade*, Henry encamped at Beauval, in the vicinity of Dourlens, from whence his majesty proceeded to Amiens, where affairs of state required his presence.

The Franciscan, Calatagirone, and the papal legate de Medici, meanwhile, had been unremitting in their zeal to conclude an armistice, which finally might

[1] Bibl. Imp. de Béth.—MS. 9109. Berger de Xivrey, Lettres Missives de Henri IV.

mature into peace between the hostile crowns. The desire demonstrated by Henry to storm and capture Dourlens, held the negotiations in suspense for an interval. The heavy rains which ensued, however, soon compelled the king to terminate the campaign; and to postpone, until the commencement of the new year, his projected assault, and the expedition which he meditated in Bretagne, to extinguish the petty rebellion of M. de Mercœur. Villeroy, at the request of the legate, made a journey to the frontier to confer with Calatagirone and the president Richardot, sent by the archduke viceroy to intimate to his majesty the sentiments of the papal and Spanish courts. In a despatch in cipher, written by the king, and addressed to his ambassador in Rome, Henry says:[1] "The sole consideration of his holiness's wish impels me to listen to amicable overtures. It is true that my kingdom requires repose; yet we are now so much accustomed to the hardships of war, that we have still spirit and resolution enough gallantly to defy our enemies. My cause is a just one; for I fight against a monarch who employs the sacred name of religion to cover his unhallowed usurpations. I believe that God suffers him to languish in severe bodily discomfort, to punish his past boundless ambition. Meantime, the ministers of the king of Spain boast so greatly of the interview which I sanctioned between Villeroy and the president de Richardot, which was followed by the journey of the cardinal legate to the frontier, that I am involved in great embarrassments. My allies believe that I have deserted them; and my Huguenot subjects dread enterprises against their faith. I have, therefore, despatched M. de Maisse to the queen of England,

[1] Aubéry—Hist. du cardinal de Joyeuse.

to explain the artifices of my foes; and to assure the queen that I mean to remain faithful to the engagements which we have contracted together; but to try to induce her said majesty to join in promoting peace.[1] I have also sent an ambassador to the States of Holland, to assure the assembly of my fidelity." Elizabeth was infuriated at the overtures made to sever Henry IV. from her alliance, by the pope, and by Philip II. The expedition of the Earl of Essex to the southern coast of Spain, and the sack of Cadiz, had more than ever complicated the relations between Elizabeth and her astute brother-in-law. The reconciliation between the crowns of France and Spain, which would necessarily comprehend the seven revolted provinces, was deprecated beyond measure by the English cabinet. The queen had good reason for her anxiety. The result of the conferences on the frontier between Villeroy and Calatagirone was the resolution to appoint plenipotentiaries to treat, during the month of January, 1598, upon the conditions likely to promote peace; meantime, a suspension of hostilities was to be observed. The arrival of Henry's ambassador extraordinary, André de Maisse, was, therefore, expected by the English cabinet with eagerness and anxiety.

The king quitted Amiens for St. Germain at the end of October, where Madame was sojourning.

[1] In another despatch Henry says: "J'ai representé au Général des Cordeliers que je ne pouvois traiter de paix sans les Etats et l'Angleterre, ayant 6000 ou 7000 hommes de pied defrayez par eux. Je luy dis que si après avoir adverty la royne, et les Etats de cette proposition, je m'apercevois qu'ils refussent d'y entendre, que alors je traiterois sans eux, et feroit connoitre a SS. que si je suis jaloux de ma foy, et de ma parole que je ne le suis pas moins de la conservation de mon Etat."—MS.

The stay of the king was brief, for Gabrielle d'Estrées disliked the princess. Henry therefore went to Fontainebleau to hunt with Montmorency. The royal recreations were here somewhat marred by the assault committed on the person of Duplessis Mornay by M. de St. Phal in the streets of Saumur. Mornay had commanded the arrest of a certain courier, suspected of conveying treasonable letters from madame d'Elbœuf and other personages to the duke de Mercœur. The papers were therefore opened, and their contents justified the suspicions of Henry's zealous governor. Amongst other letters of questionable loyalty was one from St. Phal to M. de Mercœur. Mornay, however, courteously restored this letter opened, with an admonition. St. Phal, instead of returning thanks for the lenity of this treatment, vowed vengeance for the insult. Meeting the governor in the street a few days subsequently, St. Phal struck him a blow on the head with a cudgel, and left Mornay insensible and bleeding on the pavement. St. Phal took to flight, believing that he had killed the governor, and sought refuge with his brother-in-law, the marshal de Brissac.[1] The outrage was at once communicated by express to the king by M. de Schomberg. Henry commanded the immediate arrest of St. Phal, who was incarcerated in the fort of Angers. The king then wrote to condole with his old friend Mornay. "M. du Plessis—I have extreme grief at the outrage which you have experienced, and I participate in your indignation, in my capacity of your king and your friend. As your king, I will see that justice be done—as your friend, believe that no one would

[1] Who had espoused Judith, half-sister of George de Vaudray, marquis de St. Phal d'Acciguè.

unsheathe his sword in your cause more heartily than myself! Believe my words; and be assured that in this emergency I will act towards you as a king, a ruler, and a friend!"[1] Henry directed St. Phal to be put on his trial as a common assassin *de guet-apens;* and ordered that his plea of *noblesse* should be disregarded. The powerful relatives of the culprit, however, interfered, and applied to the duchess de Beaufort for her intercession with the king; and for the exercise of her influence to prevail upon Duplessis Mornay to accept a humble apology from St. Phal, in presence of the court—a satisfaction which the latter was advised by his brother-in-law de Brissac to offer, as the only means of saving his neck from the gibbet at Montfaucon. The affair was at length thus adjusted, through the mediation of Gabrielle d'Estrées. The culprit, however, was deprived by Henry of his military rank and of his office at court, "his majesty declining the service of a person so treacherous and cowardly."

With this *tracasserie* the year 1597 terminated—"a year," writes a contemporary, "which opened with calamity and disgrace; and terminated in prosperity and glory—for which we tender humble thanks to God Almighty, who in his mercy is often pleased to convert affliction into blessings and triumph."

[1] Mém. de Duplessis Mornay, t. 2. Journal de Henri IV. The motto of St. Phal was a play on his surname of Vaudray: "J'ay valu, vaux et vaudrey," to which a wag of the court added the word "rien!" St. Phal was compelled to apologise on his knees to M. de Mornay.

CHAPTER II.

1598.

Paris on New Year's Day, 1598—Position of the realm—Duke de Mercœur and the affairs of Bretagne—Correspondence of king Henry with the queen—Conference on the frontier—Details, and subsequent negotiations with queen Elizabeth and the States of Holland—Desire of Philip II. for peace—The duke de Mercœur—His pretensions—Conferences of Chenonceau in 1596—Campaign in Bretagne—Henry leads his army—He is accompanied by Madame la Duchesse—Royal progress—Visit to queen Louise—The court at Plessis les Tours—The dukes de Bouillon et de la Tremouille salute the king—Attitude of Henry's Huguenot subjects—Duke and duchess de Mercœur seek the intercession of the duchess de' Beaufort—Their perilous position—They offer their daughter's hand to César-Monsieur—Negotiations—Arrival of the king at Pont de Cé—Madame de Mercœur presents herself to ask the royal clemency—The king appoints a commission to consider the conditions to be imposed on M. de Mercœur—Submission of the Duchy of Bretagne—Joy of the people to salute their king—Gabrielle d'Estrées presents madame de Mercœur to the king—Edict of amnesty—Arrival of M. de Mercœur at Angers—Betrothal of Francoise de Lorraine with the young duke de Vendôme—Marriage contract and festivities—Correspondence of the king with Montmorency—Birth of Alexandre Chevalier de Vendôme

—Conferences of the Protestants—Ambassadors from the queen of England and the States of Holland repair to confer with the king at Nantes—Purport of their mission, and its results—Edict of Nantes—Detail of the conferences—Negotiations at Vervins for the conclusion of peace between the crowns of France and Spain—Politic conduct of the cardinal legate—Correspondence of king Henry with queen Elizabeth—Henry confides to Rosny his intention to espouse Madame la Duchesse—Grief of Rosny—Opinion of the courtiers on the elevation of Gabrielle d'Estrées—Her deportment—Dissensions between Madame and the king—Henry resolves to bestow the hand of his sister on the duke de Bar—Peace is concluded at Vervins—The treaty—Entry of the Spanish ambassage into Paris—Magnificence and *fêtes* of the court—Ceremonies in Notre Dame—The duchess de Beaufort—Her residence in the Louvre—Embassy of the duke de Biron to Brussels—The peace of Vervins is confirmed by Philip II. and the Archduke Viceroy—Munificence of the latter—Biron confers with Louis Picotte, dit d'Orleans, a renegade monk and leaguer—Restoration of the islands of d'If and de Pomègues to the crown of France by the grand duke of Tuscany—Displeasure of queen Elizabeth at the peace of Vervins—She persists in her hostility against Spain—Discussions relative to the royal divorce—Henry consults Rosny, Villeroy, and Sillery—Alliance of Madame with the duke de Bar—Her marriage contract—She visits Monceaux — Partial reconciliation of Madame with Gabrielle d'Estrées.

THE policy of Henri Quatre, at the auspicious opening of the year 1598, was greeted, both at home and abroad, with applause. Ten years after his stormy accession, Henry beheld the exhaustion of the foreign foe; and the overthrow of the domestic cabal which had almost ruined France. The king of Spain now sought peace; and the plenipotentiaries of his Catholic majesty were on their journey to the frontier. The princes of Lorraine humbled, and stripped of pernicious power, sought to win back fame and opu-

lence by chivalrous devotion to royal interests. The duke of Savoy, involved in a ruinous war, had already renounced his preposterous pretensions on the county of Provence; and now waged *guerilla* warfare with Lesdiguières, to defend the mountain gorges along the route to Saluzzo—a possession disputed by the duke with an obstinacy disproportionate to the value of the contested district. The duke de Mercœur, of all the rebels of the Holy Union, alone remained in arms against his sovereign; but Mercœur, aware that submission to the royal authority must before long be tendered, sought to delay a humiliating surrender by proposing articles of accommodation, which were received only at the intercession of the queen dowager Louise. After the reduction of Amiens the king, however, resolved that the peace of the realm should no longer be disturbed by the rebellion of M. de Mercœur; but he indignantly refused the request of the cardinal legate that the duke might be permitted to send a deputy to the approaching congress on the frontier. "Never will I permit one of my subjects to treat with me, as with a foreign prince! Let M. de Mercœur lay down arms and submit to my authority!" warmly exclaimed the king, in answer to the solicitations of the legate.

On Saturday, January 1st, the anniversary of the installation of the Order du St. Esprit, Henry held solemn festival. The religious ceremony was performed in the church of the Augustinians; after which the king created ten knights [1]—amongst whom

[1] A ridiculous incident occurred at this investiture. Henry bestowed the order on M. de Vieuville, a gallant soldier, but once maître d'hôtel to the duke de Nevers, at the solicitation of the latter. When the king stooped to fasten the collar of the

were the duke de Ventadour and the marquis de Belin. The honour conferred upon the last-mentioned personage, after his late cowardly surrender of Ardres to the archduke, created much comment. This inconsistency, often demonstrated by the king —who, to the detriment of his faithful servants, bestowed splendid recompense on personages guilty of misdemeanours—excited general dissatisfaction. The historian d'Aubigné, who had served the king valiantly, amongst other persons, complained of insufficient reward. One day the king presented his picture to M. d'Aubigné: the latter, annoyed at not receiving a more substantial gift, wrote the following verse beneath the royal portrait:—

"Ce Prince est d'etrange nature
Je ne sais qui Diable la fait!
Car il recompense en peinture,
Ceux qui le servent en effet!"[1]

The king laughed at the sally, and good-humouredly promised d'Aubigné better recompense, "when we establish ourselves permanently in our Louvre!" Congratulations poured in from all the potentates of Europe on the glorious result of the blockade of Amiens. The city of Paris was illuminated; and the municipality presented an address. His majesty enchanted the authorities by the affability of his reply. The marshal de Biron stood at the right of the king. Henry, perceiving that the deputies were anxious to testify to the marshal their admiration of his gallant

newly-created knight, Vieuville, according to the accustomed formula, said, "Domine, non sum dignus." "Je le sais bien, je le sais bien, mon ami, mais mon neveu m'en à prié!" said the king, hastily.

[1] MSS. de la Bibl. Imp. en 10 vol. in fol. intitulé Recueil Historique—t. 4, p. 17.—Recueil de Choisy.

co-operation during the siege, took Biron by the hand, and, addressing the deputies, said, "Messieurs! make your obeisance to the marshal de Biron, whom I am proud to present to friend or to foe! He deserves your compliments and salutations." The king also received congratulations from queen Marguerite on the happy success of his arms: "Monseigneur! I need not assure your majesty of my transport on learning this most welcome news: I fervently desire that the rest of your dominions may soon submit to your authority. If my sex permitted, your majesty cannot doubt with what zeal and devotion I would hazard my life in your service; but being what I am, I pray you, sire, to believe in the perfect affection and fidelity of your very humble and obedient servant, wife, and subject—MARGUERITE."[1] This letter was accompanied by another to M. de Rosny, in which the queen continues to express herself vaguely on the affair of the divorce; hinting that, in the event of his majesty consenting to espouse a consort of birth suitable to his august alliance, her own reluctance, and the opposition of the Holy See, would speedily vanish. The queen complains that her signature was often forged by unprincipled personages for their own ends. This statement the queen makes in a billet which she addressed to M. de Lomenie, the *secretaire des commandements*, to request the latter to present and cause the king to peruse a letter on business matters which she had indited. From the frequent requests made by queen Marguerite to various high personages to present her letters to the king, and to witness their perusal by his majesty before leaving the presence, it appears that Henry treated the written appeals of his unfortunate consort

[1] Lettres de Marguerite de Valois—Guessard.

with disregard. The pecuniary position of Marguerite was ameliorated from the period that Rosny presided over the treasury. The pension of the queen was regularly paid: but with returning prosperity the incorrigible vices of Marguerite revived; and the county of Auvergne once more rang with rumours of the orgies at Usson. The few persons admitted to audience of queen Marguerite during her long sojourn at Usson, describe her beauty as much faded by anxiety and privation. She had become stout in figure; and it is alleged that her majesty sought to repair the ravages of time by an immoderate use of rouge and white paint. Yet the *port de princesse*, the inimitable smile, the witty repartee, and the gorgeous attire of the queen, carried memory back to the days of the court of Catherine de Medici, where, amid the loveliest of the highborn maidens of France, Marguerite de Valois bore away the palm.

Meanwhile the interview on the frontier between Calatagirone, Villeroy, and Richardot, was propitious. The envoys, after a careful examination of the basis of peace proposed by each government, declared that conferences might be safely opened with the prospect of successful issue. The belligerent monarchs were worn by anxieties, and sighed for peace: Henri Quatre, that he might renovate the glories of the French court, espouse his mistress, and restore the financial and domestic prosperity of his realm—Philip II., that the close of his reign might be tranquil; and that his young son Don Philip should not, on his accession to the sceptre of the Spains, find himself involved in terrible contest with his now puissant neighbour the king of France. Philip hoped likewise to witness the marriage of his beloved daughter Doña Isabella; and her peaceable installation as

sovereign of the Netherlands—a project not to be realized until peace should be concluded with France. Early during the month of January, 1598, the plenipotentiaries, French and Spanish, repaired to the little town of Vervins on the confines of Hainault—the place appointed for the tenure of the important congress. The French envoys were the learned and acute Pomponne de Bellièvre, the Nestor of French diplomacy, and Nicholas Brulart de Sillery. M. de Sillery owed his promotion to the favour of the duchesse de Beaufort, who was an ardent promoter of the peace. Villeroy was commissioned to draw the *procès-verbal* of the conference, which was daily to be transmitted to his majesty—an office for which no person could be more able. The king of Spain nominated Calatagirone General of the Franciscans—an ecclesiastic of great political ability and acuteness. The rôle of Calatagirone was to be a peculiar one in the congress: for while advocating the policy of the papal and Spanish courts, he was directed to aid the French envoys, if requisite, by apt suggestions. Don Juan Baptista de Taxis conde de Villamediana, that old and cunning agent of Spain, whose subtlety originally built up the fabric of the Holy Union, was one of the deputies chosen to participate in the coming deliberations; also, the treasurer, Louis de Verreyken, and the President Richardot, so highly commended for *chicane* by Alexander duke of Parma, and by Don Diego de Evora. Over all, the cardinal Alessandro de Medici, papal legate, and Francisco de Gonzaga bishop of Mantua the nuncio, presided. The king instructed his envoys not to treat with the Spanish court on other basis than the surrender of all French towns garrisoned by Spaniards: that representatives from the court of

England, and from the states of Holland, might join in the conferences, provided that either of these powers desired to be comprehended in the treaty: thirdly, that no envoy from the duke de Mercœur should be allowed to participate in the deliberations of congress. Ambassadors were despatched by king Henry to notify the approaching congress; and to declare his majesty's resolution to reject any treaty in which his late faithful allies were not comprehended, should they desire reconciliation "with the perfidious court of Spain." M. de Maisse was accredited to the English court: he was directed to represent to queen Elizabeth—"that the king had done all in his power to organize the great league of European princes to be directed against the power and influence of Spain and the empire, but as yet ineffectually; that his finances were exhausted, and his realm weakened and disorganized; that the German Princes promised no succours; and that as the queen herself intimated that she could only afford slender aid, being hampered by her war in Ireland, and the hostilities on the coast of Spain, the king was compelled to regard his own interests. Nevertheless, the king intended to consent to nothing without consulting the queen of England; and that if her majesty desired to be comprehended in the pending treaty, the king would prove to his good sister that the interest of England was as precious to him as that of France. But that if the queen should not choose to accept the treaty, the king prayed her majesty clearly to impart to him her resolves and intentions; also her advice to himself, so that no rupture between the crowns might ensue, as he should always prefer a dear and faithful ally like herself, to the friendship of reconciled enemies such as the Spaniards."[1] A private

[1] De Thou. Tortora—Hist. de Francia.

letter was, moreover, written by the king to Elizabeth, in which he acknowledged that such proposals had been made to him by king Philip through the legate, that, as sovereign of France, he could not in conscience refuse to relieve his realm from the calamity and burden of war. De Maisse was admitted to audience by the queen. Elizabeth received his communication with visible signs of irritation; and referred the message of his Christian majesty to the privy-council. The crisis was alarming, and the failing health of the king of Spain seemed to Elizabeth and to her ministers as the only guarantee against a renewal—after the peace with France was signed—of an invasion similar to that attempted by the Great Armada. Philip had to avenge countless insults; and, moreover, the recent foray of Essex in Andalusia. So menacing did affairs appear, that the queen convoked her parliament, and asked for fresh subsidies. Elizabeth then coldly dismissed M. de Maisse, promising to send ambassadors to convey her sentiments and proposals to his Christian majesty.

Affairs, meantime, were not altogether halcyon on the frontiers. The plenipotentiaries repaired to Vervins in contentious mood; and prepared to inaugurate the conference by wrangles on questions of precedence and etiquette. The right of M. de Mercœur to send an envoy was at first hotly debated: the orders of the king were precise, however, on this matter, and so nothing was gained by the discussion. The Spanish envoys next confessed that they had not powers to negotiate with the queen of England, should that princess, on the invitation of Henry IV., accredit ambassadors to the congress. Don Juan de Taxis, therefore, returned to Madrid

to lay this obstacle before the Spanish council, as the French envoys had been directed not to join in the deliberations until this omission was remedied. "The Spaniards persist in admitting M. de Mercœur to congress as their confederate. Never will I assent! I should thereby lose Bretagne: the duke would reap recompense for his usurpation; and I should establish an evil precedent, which might hereafter induce other of my subjects to seek foreign protection!"[1] wrote the king to M. de Luxembourg.

The king, during these transactions, diligently reviewed the advantages and evils of the crisis. An able forestalling of the designs of his enemies, followed by a prompt blow, had on more than one occasion secured the triumph of Henri Quatre; or at least left him master of the position. The king, therefore, resolved to compel the duke de Mercœur to sue for his royal clemency ere the first harangue of the plenipotentiaries echoed in the hall of conference at Vervins. United France thenceforth would protest against the pretensions of Philip II.; and by the spectacle of her unanimity, strengthen the glorious sceptre of the king. The people of Bretagne, groaning under the tyranny of Mercœur, had repelled the antiquated pretensions of his consort, Marie de Luxembourg,[2] to the sovereignty of their duchy. The duke had neither money to provide for the garrisons of his strongholds; nor to effect fresh enlistments when famine had thinned the number of

[1] Aubery—Hist. du cardinal de Joyeuse, in fol. Paris, 1654.

[2] The duchess de Mercœur was the representative of Jeanne la Boiteuse. Her paternal grandmother was Charlotte, heiress of Penthièvre, the lineal descendant of the duchess Jeanne and of her husband, Charles de Blois.

his troops. The soldiers, therefore, lived by rapine; the inhabitants whose abodes were in the neighbourhood of the fortresses being plundered and despoiled with ferocity. During the month of August of the year 1596, Mercœur, at the earnest admonition of his sister, the queen dowager, sent envoys to Chenonceau, to meet deputies appointed by the king to treat for the surrender of the duke's usurped power. Queen Louise herself presided during the first day of conference; and, in a pathetic address, besought the envoys of her brother to come to terms, whilst Mercœur might make a merit of his submission. The arrogance of the duke's envoys, however, exasperated the royal commissioners. Mercœur affected the ceremonial of the ancient and legitimate dukes of Bretagne in his negotiation. The royal envoys were Schomberg, Calignon, de Thou, Mornay, and la Rochepot. The duke de Mercœur was represented by M. de la Ragotière. Amongst other demands, the duke asked for amnesty similar in detail to that granted by the king to M. de Mayenne: that peace should be concluded with Spain; that all charges and state offices conferred by himself within the duchy should be confirmed; that all governors of strongholds should enjoy their pensions and salaries for the space of seven years. If any one of these officers died before the expiration of this stated interval, Mercœur asked for the power of nominating for the remainder of the interval to the vacant office. The duke further demanded the government of Bretagne, and the office of high admiral. Secret articles, moreover, provided for a large pecuniary indemnity; and for the purchase by the crown of the alleged claims of madame de Mercœur for the sum of 66,000 gold crowns.[1] These demands Henry's ministers

[1] De Thou.—Mezerai.

actually conceded! Mercœur then brought forward three fresh articles, which it was justly deemed impossible to grant. These preposterous requests were—the investiture of the country of Nantes; the absolute donation by the king of the port of Conquereau; and the division of the functions of lieutenant-governor of Bretagne—a post filled by the marshal de Brissac, a nobleman whom Mercœur hated, for his abandonment of the league. That M. de Mercœur did not accept with avidity the terms which the king was willing to concede, inspired every sane individual of the realm with amazement. The duke, however, was completely under the control of his wife and her mother. Madame de Martigues perpetually fired the ambition of the duke by iteration of her daughter's claims. She adjured her son-in-law to rely on the alliance of Spain: "His Catholic majesty will exact the restitution of Bretagne to its legitimate heiress; a cession, moreover, agreeable to the king of Spain, as it will cripple the power of Le Bearnnois, and be a perpetual menace to England." Mercœur, therefore, without absolutely rejecting the articles of Chenonceau, delayed the ratification of the compact under frivolous pretences. The siege of La Fère, which terminated gloriously for the king, lost its wholesome effect upon the conduct of M. de Mercœur, by the bold advance of the archduke viceroy, and the subsequent capture of Calais and Ardres. The disaffection demonstrated by the dukes de Bouillon and de la Trimouille,[1] who, in their ardour for

[1] "Il se formait au milieu du camp une cabale de Protestants mutins, ayant à leur tête MM. de la Trimouille, de Bouillon, et Duplessis, qui lui donnait le plus cruel chagrin. Ces trois, messieurs, avec d'environ une vingtaine avaient tenu une assemblée de tout le corps des religionnaires, dans laquelle ils

the interest of the reformed communities of the realm, disloyally refused to join the army of the king before Amiens, unless Henry would previously secure the liberties of his Protestant subjects by edict—acted as another provocative to continued revolt. Mercœur based his refusal to disarm on the manifest ill-will of the king, who declined to grant him the investiture of the country of Nantes! In vain the most skilled genealogists of the realm, represented to M. de Mercœur that the alleged rights of his duchess were unsustainable; that the claim of Jeanne la Boiteuse and the house of Penthièvre had been disallowed in the 14th century, by the universal consent of the people of Bretagne. Moreover, that the lineal heiress of Bretagne was the Infanta Doña Isabel, in right of her mother Elizabeth de Valois; but that the fundamental law of the realm enacted "that all fiefs, domains, lands, etc., possessed by any prince or princess, on ascending the throne of France, should be for ever deemed incorporate with and lapsed in the domains of the crown"; even, as was now the case, where the failure of direct descendants of such sovereigns necessitated the succession of a collateral line of princes. Mercœur, however, maintained an attitude of passive resistance, until after the fall of Amiens. Henry then notified to the duke that the stipulations of Chenonceau could no longer be conceded; but that, as an act of grace, the remainder of the year should be given him to reflect on his position, so that a timely surrender might obviate the penalties of treason. Mercœur, thereupon, commenced a clamorous agitation, through

avaient ouvert et favorisé de toutes leurs force l'avis de profiter de la conjoncture du siège d'Amiens pour arracher du roi un édit qui leur donnat entière satisfaction."—Sully, liv. 9ème.

the Spanish ministers, to be admitted to plead his own cause in congress—a request sternly refused by the king, who, at length wearying of the quibbles of the duke, resolved on his forcible reduction. The decision of his majesty was greeted with applause by the states of the loyal portion of the duchy of Bretagne. Mercœur then sûmmoned the Sieur de Montmartin, the envoy sent by Henry, and attempted to renew negotiations.[1] Nevertheless, the duke took heart, and believed that the reduction of the numerous hostile fortresses of the duchy would impede the royal progress, and enable him still to dictate terms: and moreover, he relied in extremity on the protection of Gabrielle d'Estrées. M. de Mayenne was on terms of confidential intercourse with the duchess de Beaufort; and at the period of the conferences of Chenonceau (1596) had actually mentioned a project of alliance between her little César-Monsieur and the only daughter of the duke and duchess de Mercœur, the wealthiest heiress of the realm. Gabrielle made no reply; but from her manner Mayenne concluded that the prospect of so rich an alliance for her son would eventually ensure the powerful patronage of the duchess. Mayenne, therefore, secretly exhorted the duke de Mercœur to make this important proposal, in case he should be reduced to implore the royal clemency. The duchess and her mother, however, had indignantly rejected the suggestion of alliance at any period between the young Françoise de Lorraine, legitimate heiress of Clisson and Penthièvre, Vaudemont and Bretagne, with the bastard son of the king! These illustrious ladies, however,

[1] De Thou—who took an active share in the negotiation with M. de Mercœur.

so far forgot prudent circumspection as to comment, in severe language, upon the infamous lives led by the sisters of the favourite; remarks which officious personages repeated in the ear of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Madame de Beaufort resolved therefore to abandon the duke and his consort to the fierce resentment of the king; who, exasperated at the attempt made to join the congress, menaced Mercœur with attainder—a resolve which his majesty would undoubtedly have executed, by the advice of Rosny, if this doom had not been eventually averted by the intercession of Gabrielle d'Estrées.

On the 2nd of February king Henry quitted Paris, *en route* for Bretagne. The prince de Conty was appointed governor of Paris during his majesty's absence —a nomination approved by all the king's ministers; for the prince was inoffensive; and from his infirmity of speech seldom ventured a remark in council. Rosny therefore interpreted the royal will; and discharged in reality the functions devolving on the council during the campaign. Montmorency assumed the command of the army of Picardy; while the conduct of the force destined to occupy Bretagne was conferred on Albert de Gondy, duke de Retz, the senior marshal of France. The duke received orders to precede his majesty, and to reinforce the marshal de Brissac within the duchy. Henry, being accompanied by the duchess de Beaufort, journeyed leisurely. The expedition partook more of a military progress than a campaign; for when once the power and *prestige* of the king were launched against M. de Mercœur, his only resource was submission. The duke had neither money, troops, nor much military repute: town

after town, therefore, surrendered to Brissac on the first rumours of the march of the royal forces. The commandants of Craon, Rochefort, Ancenis, and Mirabeau, the chief strongholds on which Mercœur relied, laid down arms and implored the royal clemency. Dinant rose against its garrison, and surrendered on the day upon which Henry commenced his journey.[1] The town of Plessis-Bertrand opened its gates to Brissac; also six other small places ejected the duke's soldiery—the citizens hoisted the banner of the *fleurs de lis*; and carried their keys to M. de Montmartin, his majesty's envoy. The Spaniards, meanwhile, fortified themselves in the port of Blavet;[2] and prepared to defend their lives. Don Juan de Aguilar issued a manifesto, in which he accused Mercœur of "incapacity, inertness, treachery, and frivolity." The duke and his consort were residing in state in the ducal palace of Nantes. On the tidings of the king's march the wildest tumult ensued. The citizens besieged the palace, shouted "*vive le roy!*" and overwhelmed the unlucky duke with insult. The position of the duke and his consort was pitiable; their sole resource was a flight to Brussels, to place themselves under the protection of the archduke viceroy, or to submit to the clemency of their sovereign. The fate of the duke d'Aumale acted as a warning to Mercœur; he resolved therefore upon timely surrender. Accordingly passports were hastily demanded from Montmartin the royal envoy, to enable the duchess de Mercœur, Charles de Bournœuf bishop of Nantes, and M. de la Pardieu governor of the fortress of Machecoul, to proceed to Angers, to lay the sub-

[1] De Thou—Mezerai—Sully.

[2] Now Port St. Louis.

mission of the duchy at the king's feet.[1] King Henry and madame la Duchesse, with their little César, made sojourn at Fontainebleau until the 18th of February, where the king took recreation in his gardens, and in superintending "his buildings." His majesty then proceeded to Thoury, and there received the submission of the commandants of Dinant, Mirabeau, Ancenis, Craon, and Montjan, to whom Henry generously granted free pardon for their rebellion; and for the enormities perpetrated within their governments during the sway of the Holy Union. A manifesto was here issued by the king, exhorting officers in the service of the duke de Mercœur to disarm; as after the entry of his majesty into Bretagne all personages found in arms would be punished as traitors, and excluded from participation in treaties subsequently concluded. The effect of this proclamation was signal. The late partisans of Mercœur surpassed each other in frantic endeavours to abandon a falling cause. The most notable amongst the late malcontents sent their wives to Angers, ready to make intercession on the arrival of his majesty. Others forwarded petitions and valuable bribes to the chief personages of the court to procure letters of amnesty for their past offences.[2] From Thoury the king proceeded to Blois, making sojourn of a day at Orléans. The king and madame de Beaufort next spent two days with queen Louise at Chenonceau. The queen was profoundly afflicted at

[1] De Thou, liv. 120. Journal de Henri IV.

[2] Ibid.—Cayet. Chron. Nov., année 1598. One of the adherents of the duke de Mercœur one day asked him whether he dreamed of making himself duc de Bretagne. Mercœur responded, "Je ne sais si c'est un songe; mais il y a plus de dix ans qu'il dure!"

the condition of her brother's affairs, and made intercession in his behalf. She prayed Henry to remember Mercœur's illustrious birth; and that the duke, through her unworthy self, had the honour to be brother-in-law to the late king; "and although," the queen said, "the claims of madame de Mercœur are untenable, yet some presumption might be pardoned to a princess the lineal descendant of Jeanne la Boiteuse, and heiress of Penthièvre!" "Madame!" replied the king, angrily, "be assured that I will attach the same value to your intercession as M. de Mercœur did to the remonstrances you were pleased to make him to shew himself loyal and a Frenchman after the Spaniards seized my good town of Amiens!"[1] Louise tried to render the duchess propitious. Gabrielle, however, remembered the contempt of Madame de Mercœur, and ironically declared, "that she presumed not to tamper in affairs of state, such as the pardon of a great personage like M. de Mercœur!" The queen, in her zeal, ventured distantly to allude to a betrothal for her little niece Françoise, while she caressed the bold and beautiful boy, who was the pride and darling of his royal father. On quitting Chenonceau, the king proceeded to Plessis-les-Tours, continuing his journey leisurely, to afford time for the ferment in Bretagne to subside. Here the king was visited by the dukes de Bouillon and de la Trimouille, who presented themselves to assure his majesty that anxiety for the Protestant cause, and not disloyalty, had debarred them from participating in the late glorious campaign.[2] Henry gave them cold but

[1] Lettres de Bongars, ambassadeur en Allemagne—lettre 173. Amelot de la Houssaye.—Notes sur les lettres du cardinal d'Ossat.

[2] De Thou liv. 120.

courteous reception; for the disaffection of these potent noblemen had confirmed the sinister impression abroad amongst the Huguenots of the realm—that Henry intended to suppress and persecute his late co-religionists. In their dismay, after the abjuration of the king, the Huguenots were unjust and hasty in their decisions. They forgot that the kingdom at that period was but half conquered; and that the same reason which had compelled Henry IV. to exchange his faith for a crown, rendered it impossible for the king to extend and confirm their privileges until he himself should be firmly established. The reformed churches, therefore, manifested turbulent excitement: synod after synod was convoked; noisy declamation and taunts awaited the royal commissioners; while the panic was provoked by the writings of Bouillon, La Tremouille, and Mornay. Rosny throughout these cabals, though staunch to his outward faith, was, as usual, self-possessed, reserved, and loyal—the welfare of the entire body politic was his aspiration—and he had refused to join or promote the unseemly agitation of faction. Private dissatisfaction, moreover, rather than religious zeal, had alienated the dukes de Bouillon and de la Trimouille. Bouillon, since his alliance with a princess of Nassau, had affected sovereign pomp; and resented the refusal of the king to allow him to make war independently on states adjacent to his petty principality of Sedan, or to enlist soldiers. The self-appreciation of the duke de Bouillon rendered his residence at court disagreeable to himself and embarrassing to his royal master. The duke aspired to be friend, minister, chief courtier, and confidant to the king; and when he found such pretensions resisted, the sharpness of his tongue filled

the ante-chambers of the royal apartment with broils. The duke de la Trimouille owed the king a grudge, because he had taken the guardianship of the young Condé, the duke's nephew, with the avowed intent of bringing up the prince in the orthodox faith. The king, who ardently desired to secure an era of peace and tranquillity to his realm, condescended, nevertheless, to assure the dukes of his wish to satisfy the legitimate demands of his Protestant subjects. His majesty said that one of his motives in visiting Bretagne was to confer at Pont de Cé with the commissioners[1] nominated to ascertain the sentiments of the reformed communities; with a view to the publication of an edict confirming and establishing the churches—a boon which his affairs alone for the first time permitted him to offer to the Protestants of the realm; "inasmuch," said his majesty, "as I, for the first time, now find myself supreme." The dukes, therefore, satisfied by the royal assurances, consented to give Henry the benefit of their counsels, and to join the royal *cortége*.

One of the greatest triumphs enjoyed by the duchess de Beaufort happened during the sojourn of the king at Tours. Gabrielle d'Estrées received a humble letter from the duchess de Mercœur, praying that she would obtain from the king a passport, to enable her to gain access to the royal presence; and detailing a repulse she had met with from the governor of Angers. Marie de Luxembourg quitted Nantes, and, attended by the persons chosen to accompany her, journeyed to Angers, where royal

[1] These commissioners were Gaspard comte de Schomberg, the historian de Thou, Sofroy de Calignon, once chancellor to queen Jeanne d'Albret, the under-secretary of state de Gesvres, and the president de Jeannin.

lodgings had been prepared. At the gates madame de Mercœur was refused permission to enter Angers; and, as the duchess presented herself without passport from the king, the governor called a council to deliberate whether her arrest should not be accomplished.[1] Admonished of her danger by some friendly voice, madame de Mercœur precipitately retired, and sought refuge in the adjacent town of Pont de Cé. From thence, believing that the ruin of the duke was resolved upon, from the severity which she had herself experienced, the duchess wrote to madame la Duchesse, imploring her intervention and assistance; while she placed the fortunes of herself, her husband, and her young daughter at the feet of the powerful favourite. A word from the lips of his mistress sufficed to moderate the wrath of the king: and the aggrandizement of her son César was the pervading passion of the duchess. The grandeur and alliances of her elder born would diminish one of the heaviest obstacles to the attainment of the queenly rank so coveted. Monsieur could never be saluted as dauphin—the nearest approximation, therefore, to the elevated dignity which Gabrielle hoped might be the lot of his younger brothers, was politic and indispensable. Already the broad lands and magnificent palaces of Anet and Monceaux were settled on her little César, with the duchy of Beaufort; besides the promise of that of Vendôme, the ancient appanage of Bourbon. The betrothment, therefore, of the young prince with the heiress of Mercœur would render him the wealthiest personage of the realm of France. The passport demanded by madame de Mercœur was granted as soon as demanded by the

[1] De Thou, liv. 120. Sully, liv. 9ème.

duchess. Gabrielle wrote to madame de Mercœur, assuring her of the *bienveillance* of the king, subject to the submission of the duke her husband. She, however, counselled the duchess to remain at Pont de Cé until the arrival there of the court; when Gabrielle herself promised to present her to the king. "The duchess de Mercœur is at Pont de Cé, waiting my arrival; she is authorized to offer me *carte blanche*, and to accept any condition I may please to impose," wrote Henry to the constable, with much complacency. The king arrived at Pont de Cé on the 6th day of March. Madame de Mercœur immediately waited on Gabrielle, from whom she received cordial reception; nevertheless, the king declined to admit her to his presence until articles of surrender were signed on behalf of the duke. The king nominated commissioners to treat with the duchess and her colleagues, amongst whom were the count de Schomberg, M. de Thou, M. de Calignon, de Gesous secretary-of-state, and the president Jeannin. On the 7th of March these personages met at the lodgings of Schomberg, where the duchess de Mercœur, the bishop of Nantes, and the personages deputed by Mercœur, gave *rendezvous*. "The treaty," says de Thou,[1] one of the royal commissioners, "was dictated by us. Submissive, with downcast eyes and suppliant air, the deputies of M. de Mercœur approved all that was proposed. It was agreed that the duke should quit Bretagne, resign its government, and restore all places garrisoned by his orders, and dispose of the patrimony of Penthièvre, on the sole condition of receiving a pension of 50,000 livres."

The rigour of these conditions deeply affected ma-

[1] Livre 120.

dame de Mercœur; and she retired from the conference overwhelmed with grief,[1] after affixing her signature to the articles which dissipated her delusions of ducal state. Madame de Beaufort then manifested the power of her patronage—which she desired the duchess to feel could alone save the duke from ruin and arraignment—by sending a message praying madame de Mercœur to repair to the castle during the afternoon, when she would present her to the king. When in conference with the duchess, madame de Mercœur deplored the conditions imposed upon her husband; and especially lamented the duke's dismissal from the office of governor of Bretagne. The future alliance of mademoiselle de Mercœur with Monsieur was then discussed. Soon the two duchesses were agreed; and Gabrielle thereupon promised to obtain a mitigation of the treaty; and principally, the repeal of the order so deprecated by madame de Mercœur, which rendered it compulsory upon the duke and duchess to sell their estates, the heritage of the houses of Clisson and Penthièvre, situated within the duchy of Bretagne. The king presently entered the apartment and cordially greeted Madame de Mercœur. The matrimonial alliance was then again debated in the presence of his majesty.[2]

[1] "La duchesse de Mercœur etail retirée chèz elle, accablée de tristesse et dans l'incertitude de l'evenement."—De Thou.

[2] "Le roi parla même à la duchesse de Mercœur de ce mariage qu'il souliaitait tant. La duchesse qui avait encore un air de suppliance ne parut point s'en eloigner, et demanda seulement qu'on fit l'honneur a son mari de lui proposer ce mariage. Le roi gouta cette remonstrance et Gabrielle d'Estrées l'appuya."—De Thou, whose narration, as an eye-witness of the events in question, is valuable, and highly interesting.

The duchess de Mercœur assured the king of her own assent; but prayed "that the honour might be done to M. de Mercœur her husband to ask him for the hand of his daughter." Gabrielle replied, that the demand was just; and then asked madame de Mercœur to accompany her in the entry she was about to make during the afternoon into the town of Angers. Compliance with this request must have cost the duchess a pang, as she stepped into the gorgeous litter of the favourite, and made public entry, under the patronage of Gabrielle d'Estrées, into the town from which she had just been ignominiously repulsed. The mother of the duchess de Mercœur, madame de Martigues, arrived a few days subsequently, bringing her little grand-daughter; and full powers from the duke to negotiate the marriage of his heiress with César-Monsieur. The satisfaction of madame la Duchesse was therefore complete; and she espoused the cause of the duke as her own.

Angers, meantime, was filled with suppliants anxious to procure absolution for their revolt. Many sought the mediation of Gabrielle d'Estrées—some of the chieftains sent their wives to implore the royal clemency—pardon being generally accorded by the king to his fair petitioners. A circular letter was then drawn up in council and despatched to the towns and villages of the duchy, announcing the pacification of Bretagne; the whole of the province, excepting the places garrisoned by the soldiers of his Catholic majesty, now acknowledging the royal authority. The reputation of M. de Mercœur was tenderly dealt with, in consideration of the approaching betrothal of his daughter to Monsieur. His refusal to ratify the treaty of Chenonceau, and his subse-

quent contumacy, were palliated, and declared to have been inspired "by the patriotic motives of holding Bretagne for the king pending the critical interval of the siege of Amiens; as Aguilar, the Spanish commandant in the port of Blavet, demonstrated a disposition to occupy the chief military positions of the duchy!" In the edict transmitted by the king for registration to the parliament of Paris, the same deceptive language was adopted: the king declared therein, "that he received the duke de Mercœur again into his royal favour; also the clergy, gentlemen, and burgesses who had espoused the designs of the said duke, on condition that these said persons took oath of fidelity to the crown: his majesty, moreover, was pleased to confirm all judicial appointments made by the duke; and to proclaim a general amnesty for all offences. The duke de Mercœur, on consideration of these articles, resigned his government of Bretagne into the hands of the king; and accepted instead, the sum of 236,000 crowns to defray the cost of the war with the custody of the castles of Lambale, Guingamp, and Monlemort, a pension of 17,000 crowns, and the command of a company of men-at-arms![1] "To be rewarded by our king, it is necessary first to betray him!" was the sarcastic comment of Sancy, on perusing this edict. On the 20th day of March M. de Mercœur arrived at Angers to salute the king; and personally to negotiate with madame la Duchesse the alliance

[1] Edit en faveur de duc de Mercœur.—De Thou, liv. 120. Journal de Henri IV. Circulaire pour la pacification de la Bretagne. [2] Cayet Chron. Nov. Edit du roy sur les articles accordez au duc de Mercœur pour la reduction des villes de Nantes et autres de Bretagne du 8 Mai, 1598. Morel—Mém. de la Ligue, t. 6.

which her successful mediation had ensured to her son.

The duke previously demanded assurances from his majesty that the decree of amnesty had been despatched to Paris: also, that the compulsory sale of the possessions of the house of Penthièvre in Bretagne would not be enforced. On the day that Mercœur was expected, the king went to hunt over the domain of Le Verger, a castle belonging to the duke de Rohan, leaving commands for all officers of the household present in Angers, and the heads of the garrison, to salute M. de Mercœur at the gate of the town, and conduct him to the castle. This injunction created much discontent; the duke was justly regarded as a pardoned rebel, whose chastisement had been averted by a bribe to madame la Duchesse. The king himself appeared unwilling to discourse on the articles of a compact which degraded the majesty of the crown. Mercœur was received by the duchesses, his wife, and mother-in-law: by these ladies he was conducted to the presence of madame Gabrielle, who sat under a canopy, having by her side Monsieur, and his little bride elect, Françoise de Lorraine, who was two years older than her affianced. The duke had scarcely complimented his patroness, than the return of the king was announced by a flourish of trumpets. Henry presently entered, attended by the chief lords of his court. Mercœur, who was of excitable temperament, advanced, and falling on his knees, kissed the royal hand; and continued with undignified volubility to pour forth protestations of future loyalty. Henry raised the duke, and candidly assured him that his past offences were forgotten, and effaced by the auspicious betrothal of their children. M. de Mercœur

bowed profoundly, and continued to make obeisance at every word uttered by his majesty, to the amusement of all present, and of M. de Bouillon especially; when a ludicrous accident which happened to part of the attire of the duke during one of his *courbettes* overpowered the courtly restraint of the assemblage, and a burst of laughter ensued, in which the king could not refrain from joining. The same afternoon conferences were holden to settle the different clauses of the marriage contract between Monsieur and mademoiselle de Mercœur. The king created his son duke de Vendôme,[1] and a peer of France; and conferred upon him the enjoyment of the revenues of Vendôme. The government of Bretagne was given to Monsieur, with the consent of the duke de Mercœur; also a sum of 265,000 crowns, which, with the lands of Anet and Mónceaux, were settled on the future offspring of the marriage. Henry, moreover, promised the young couple a pension of 6,000 crowns. The duke and duchess de Mercœur covenanted to recognize the future duchess de Vendôme as their sole heiress; and to settle on her an annual income of 16,000 crowns, secured on the duchy of Penthièvre.[2] The following day the cere-

[1] Henry's adoration of this boy was incredibly great. One day madame de Mercœur, after watching the king for some minutes, who was combing and frizzing his son's hair, said, "Est-il possible qu'un grand roy, comme votre majesté, est bon barbier?" Henry, who detected the irony, promptly replied, "Pourquoy non, ma cousine, c'est moi qui fait la barbe à tout le monde. Voyez-vous point comme je l'ay bien faite ces jours passés a M. de Mercœur votre mari?"—MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. fr. 1644. Supplement Journal de Lestoile—an inedited manuscript of the greatest interest.

[2] De Thou, liv. 120. "Les fiançailles furent celebrées à

mony of betrothment was performed by the cardinal de Joyeuse; the bridegroom was four years old, and the bride-elect had just attained her sixth year. It was agreed that the youthful bride should reside with madame la Duchesse, who volunteered to superintend her education. Though this alliance was highly advantageous in a pecuniary sense to his son, the king throughout his correspondence alludes to it reluctantly. The people of France had anticipated a brief but glorious campaign, followed by an advance upon Nantes; from which city the king was expected to issue his decrees, and to receive as a conqueror the submission of Mercœur and his allies. The unconditional pardon of so noted a malcontent—a claimant, moreover, of the duchy of Bretagne—followed by the marriage of the duke's wealthy heiress with the son of the king, was felt to be a compromise injurious to the honour of the crown. "Sire! I regret deeply to find you still here!" exclaimed Rosny abruptly, on his arrival at Angers, where he had been summoned to share in the religious conferences of the Huguenots. "I have known you so long, *mon ami*, that I understand the nature of the reproach which your words imply: nevertheless, if you knew all that has occurred, you would justify me!" hastily interposed the king. To the constable, Henry announces the betrothal of his son to mademoiselle de Mercœur, with still greater embarrassment. "*Mon compère*," wrote his majesty, "I despatch Mytaut to you, with the articles accorded to my cousin the duke de Mercœur. He will tell you how I am faring; and likewise announce that I have agreed to conclude the marriage

Angers avec la même magnificence que si c'eut été d'un fils de France légitime."—Perefixe 2, partie.

of my son César with the daughter of the said duke —an alliance so advantageous that I should have done wrong to my son to decline. Loving César as you do, if you had been with me you must have counselled me so to act. You know that it is natural for good fathers to seek benefits for their children; and I could not provide better for my said son than to procure him the most wealthy alliance in the realm."[1] Apparently Montmorency did not sympathize in the king's paternal feelings; as he had desired the alliance of Monsieur for his own daughter; especially after Henry appropriated the hand of the infant heir of Montmorency for his daughter madame Henriette Catherine, whose birth had been celebrated with so much splendour in Rouen. The king consoles the constable for this disappointment, when writing to announce the birth of a second son, of whom Gabrielle was delivered in Nantes a fortnight after the betrothal of her son César. "Believe, *mon compère*, that the marriage of my son to mademoiselle de Mercœur will not dimimish the affection which I bear you. God has given me to-day a second son, beautiful as my son de Vendôme, and he shall hold towards you the place which my said son César should have filled."[2]

State affairs of moment, meantime, happily diverted the minds of Henry's subjects from dwelling on the deplorable weaknesses which marred the character of their king. While the French and Spanish plenipo-

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. de Béth., 9068, fol. 1. Lettres Missives, t. 4.

[2] Ibid. fol. 3. The second son of Gabrielle was named Alexandre, and bore the title of the chevalier de Vendôme. The dissension which followed his baptism will be hereafter related.

tentiaries combated at Vervins, under the stern eye of Montmorency, for privilege and precedency in debate, the Huguenots of the realm, distracted by internal dissensions, had been summoned by the king to send deputies to Nantes, that their grievances might be redressed; and the position of the churches ameliorated by a revision of preceding edicts. The ambassadors of queen Elizabeth and those of the States of Holland were likewise expected, to notify the answer of their respective sovereigns on the proposals communicated by king Henry. The utmost consternation prevailed amongst Henry's Huguenot subjects at the prospect of this pacification. The overthrow of the duke de Mercœur, which rendered the king supreme, and the probability that Henry's alliance with the queen of England would thenceforth diminish in intimacy, increased the panic. "The king has abjured our faith," exclaimed some of the deputies; "his alliance with the holy see is already intimate; and his union with Spain apparently only a matter of time: what guarantee, therefore, have we for the future recognition and extension of our faith, or for the confirmation of our privileges? We are in worse plight than during the late reign, when we possessed the valiant arm and alliances of the king!" So imminent did the peril appear to the leaders of the Huguenots—Bouillon, Trimouille, Mornay, the duchess de Rohan, and the princess Catherine—that the continuance of war was deemed necessary for the very existence of their faith until a plenary edict had been extorted from the government! During the siege of Amiens, not only did the great Huguenot captains refuse military aid to their king, but they had attempted to organize a faction, to be termed "Les Bons Français," under

the protection of the queen of England, for the preservation of the faith. The king, nevertheless, had done all that the success of his arms enabled him to accord. At great risk, and before his own abjuration had tranquillized the minds of the majority of his subjects, Henry issued again, and solemnly ratified the edict of Poitiers, granted by Henry III., and for the subversion of which the duke de Guise had taken up arms. Moreover, his majesty permitted his sister and her household the public exercise of the faith in Paris. The privileges of the Huguenots, as defined in the edict of Poitiers, were limited: but still it was a great boon to the churches to be thus emancipated, after the absolute proscription launched against them by Guise and the leaders of the Holy Union—a liberty which they owed to the glorious campaigns of the king. By the articles of the edict of Poitiers, the privilege of worship according to the reformed tenets was confined to the districts conceded by the edicts given in the early portion of the reign of Charles IX. No *prêche* might be holden within thirty miles of Paris. The marriage of converted priests was declared valid, and their children legitimate; but Huguenots were excluded from holding public offices.

To free themselves from all civil disabilities was the aim of the communities; and past experience indicated that such concessions were more likely to be extorted from government, during a period of warfare and panic. Consequently, virulent agitation was maintained; the king was traduced, and treacherous motives ascribed to all his acts; while the assertion was derided that Henry, when firmly seated on his throne, intended voluntarily to emancipate

the churches. The duchess de Rohan[1] especially demonstrated animosity; and in consequence, by order of the king, was requested by Madame to retire from her household. "Madame de Rohan condescended to intrigue with private individuals and others to induce them to vote for taking up arms against the king, to compel his majesty to accept the terms prescribed by his Huguenot subjects; in which the said duchess was marvellously assisted by Aubigné, so renowned for his bitter and satirical tongue. It was Aubigné who dared to maintain in the Protestant assemblies that no confidence ought to be placed in the king, who had abjured with the reformed faith all affection, goodwill, and gratitude for the Calvinists of his realm; that necessity alone induced the king to dissimulate; and that in reality he had no solicitude to preserve the lives, faith, and liberty of his reformed subjects. Peace with Spain would crown their woes, because political motives were likely to induce close alliance between France, Spain, and the Papacy. The only resource, therefore, was to unite with the duke de Mercœur, or any other enemy of the king, and force the latter to accord their just demands."[2] It was therefore with joy of the most rapturous de-

[1] Madame de Rohan, though celebrated for her heroism and devotion to the principles of reform, had an unyielding cynical character, which rendered her very unpopular. Her temper was harsh and dogmatical. The duchess de Rohan was the author of a satirical pamphlet against Henri IV., entituled, "Apologie pour le roy Henri IV., par madame la duchesse de Rohan douairière, mère du grand duc de Rohan, faite en l'année 1596. Preuves du Journal de Lestoile, MS. de St. Germain des Près, fol. 88." This MS. is endorsed, "Invective avec ironie dressée par madame de Rohan contre le roy Henri IV."

[2] Mém. de Sully, liv. 9ème.

scription that the Huguenot deputies, who had been wrangling with MM. de Schomberg and de Thou at Chatelleraud during ten months, responded to the royal invitation to confer with his majesty at Nantes. Victorious over Mercœur; omnipotent in every province of the realm; solicited to make peace by the Spanish court—Henry, at length, beheld himself supreme. It was therefore with shame that Henry's Huguenot friends deplored their past disaffection; and acknowledged that the simple word of their true-hearted king might have been trusted.

Some, however, affected yet to doubt; and alluded with satisfaction to the presence in Nantes of Sir Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's envoy; who, with count Justin de Nassau admiral of Zealand, and John de Barnevelt, envoys of the Dutch republic, had arrived in France.

The king granted audience to these ambassadors pending the conferences of the Huguenots, a few days after his entry into Nantes. Cecil, on behalf of his royal mistress, taunted the king with his insincere professions of the previous year; and exhorted his majesty to reject accommodation with Spain. The ambassadors of England and the States then offered the king a contingent of 10,000 infantry and 1000 horse, to be maintained at the cost of their respective countries, provided the king would recall his plenipotentiaries from Vervins.[1] Henry commissioned Cheverny to explain to the ambassadors the impossibility of continuing the war. The chancellor, therefore, frankly stated that France was now loyal; and that as the king of Spain offered to restore all places garrisoned by his troops, every cause of hostility between the crowns vanished.

[1] De Thou, liv. 120. Hume—Reign of queen Elizabeth.

Cecil nevertheless persisted in his remonstrances; but his explanation of the ulterior intentions of his royal mistress were so vague as to mystify the royal council. "I cannot understand whether the queen will conclude peace, or whether it is her intention to continue the war. I however clearly perceive that her ambassador would have been glad to prevent me from concluding peace, without pledging his mistress to support me in war," wrote Henry to Montmorency.[1] The king states that he had signified to Cecil that, whereas the treaty would restore his towns, the small assistance afforded by his English and Dutch allies could avail little towards their reconquest. To his ambassador in Rome Henry writes: "The queen of England and the States demonstrate much displeasure at the proposed peace. As for the Huguenots, it is now politic, I must tell you, to satisfy them, else they might join with the English and Dutch in kindling civil war throughout my dominions. This is the design of the ——————[2] who are Spanish rather than Christian; and violent and ambitious rather than charitable. Such secret enemies, who sharpen and complicate the domestic affairs of a realm, are more to be dreaded than open foes."[3] Cecil next demanded—how, if his majesty concluded peace, he contemplated to discharge his pecuniary and other obligations to his late allies?—as it was not the intention of the queen of England

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune, fol. 82. Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. 4—Xivrey.

[2] This word is left blank by the editor (Aubery) of "l'Histoire du cardinal de Joyeuse." M. Berger de Xivrey, the learned editor of "Lettres Missives de Henri IV."—a wonderful collection of documents connected with this reign—believes that the word omitted is "Jesuits."

[3] Hist. du cardinal de Joyeuse, in folio, t. 1654.

to participate in the pending treaty, unless the king of Spain, as a preliminary, acknowledged the Dutch republic. After much recrimination it was agreed—as Henry was not to be diverted from his resolve to negotiate—that the king should refund by instalments the sums advanced by the queen of England and the States of Holland; and undertake to pay to the said States, to enable them to continue the war, the additional subsidies which he had promised in the treaty signed between the crowns of England and France in the year 1596—a concession which, but for the earnest desire of king Philip to conclude peace, might have entailed the rupture of the conferences on the frontier. Henry then declared, that although he was resolved to confer the blessings of peace on a realm which had suffered the tribulations of anarchy for the space of thirty-nine years; yet, if the queen of England would join in the negotiations at Vervins, he pledged his royal word not to sign any treaty in which her majesty was not comprehended. This loyal message produced no effect on Elizabeth; the queen recalled her ambassador, who was throughout supported by the Dutch envoys; and despatched Sir Thomas Vere to Holland to conclude a fresh treaty, offensive and defensive, with the States-General of the Seven Provinces, for the prosecution of the war with Spain.

The conferences of the Huguenot deputies were, meantime, carried on in the great hall of the old ducal château of Nantes, with a fervour and eloquence befitting the magnitude of the cause advocated. The chief personages who took part in the debate were the dukes de Bouillon and de la Trimouille, Duplessis Mornay, M. de Calignon, the count de Schomberg, the young duke de Rohan, the president Jacques

Auguste de Thou, the minister Chamier—who drew the clauses of the subsequent edict—the president de Jeannin, and other able and learned Calvinist ministers, who arrived from all parts of the realm to discuss the enactment which was to emancipate the churches, and confirm privileges and immunities so valiantly won.[1] All past edicts were reviewed from the celebrated Edit de Janvier—granted by the regent Catherine de Medici in 1562, subsequently revoked on the petition of the parliament of Paris, and followed by the first religious war in France—down to l'Edit de Poitiers, by which Henry III. modified the tyrannous decrees of the states of Blois; and to annul which, the duke de Guise commenced the war of the Holy Union. The most liberal clauses were extracted from the edicts, and embodied in the new articles, after a profound examination of the acts of the conferences of Millaud, Nérac, and Fleix; which contained the opinions, and interpreted the views of the personages, the originators of the decrees under review. Clauses were introduced conferring complete privilege of worship in almost all cities and towns, and especially in those mentioned by the edicts of the years 1577, 1596, 1597, with emancipation from every civil disability: so that all state offices, including judicial and court charges, and posts connected with the farming of the revenue, became thenceforth open to the Huguenot chivalry and *bourgeoisie*. The new edict in all comprehended 92 clauses, so carefully weighed by Chamier in regard to their phraseology and future application, that the latter often boasted that no denomination of Christians had a code of ecclesiastical and civil privileges more precisely defined. Fifty-two secret

[1] Benoit—Hist. de l'Edit de Nantes.

articles were subsequently added; some of which modified in trifling degree previous clauses, in which the stipulations accorded, clashed with the terms of state treaties. For instance, freedom of worship was granted—but the king had concluded compacts with divers lords of the league, in which the exercise of the reformed faith was prohibited in certain towns and districts, such as Soissons, Rheims, Dijon, Sens, Orléans, and Paris. As compensation for these limitations, the Huguenots were permitted to retain possession of the strongholds then garrisoned by their troops for the space of eight years; while the salaries of certain of their chief ministers were to be defrayed from the public treasury.[1] Many were the misgivings of the able projectors of the edict before it was presented to his majesty for ratification. Henry, however, approved of its spirit and enactments; and, to the rapturous satisfaction of his Huguenot subjects, affixed his sign-manual to the edict on the 13th day of April, 1598, to which was also appended the great seal of France.[2] It was stipulated by Henry's ministers that a delay should yet intervene before the presentation of the edict to the parliament of Paris, and to the various provincial courts. The king desired that the peace with Spain should first be ratified; and that the legate might previously quit the kingdom, before Paris was edified by the acrimonious debates certain to attend

[1] De Thou, liv. 120. Cayet. Chron. Septennaire. L'Edit de Nantes. "J'ai mis fin a l'affaire de ceux de la religion, et de ce costé là j'ai l'esprit en repos," writes the king to Caumont de la Force. Dict. de Bayle—Art. Chamier. Moreri—Dict. Sully, liv. 9ème.

[2] L'Edit du roy sur la pacification des troubles de ce royaume, donné à Nantes, Avril, 1598.—Paris, Morel, 1599.

the registration by the parliament of concessions and privileges so extensive. "To carry this edict through my high courts will need all my present power and *prestige:* to have conceded these articles at an earlier period would have ruined the churches, and have redounded to the permanent disgrace of myself and my good Huguenots. So, monseigneur, you have now my reason for a delay resented by your party with such vindictive acrimony," said his majesty one day to the duke de Bouillon. Rosny participated little in the drawing up of the edict, which finally enriched the realm to an extent, that, had the power of prevision been granted to him, must have fulfilled his most extravagant financial computations. The south-western provinces of the realm, in which the French Calvinists chiefly settled, were soon distinguished for the wealth, worth, and genius of their inhabitants. Freedom of thought, religious responsibility, and the consciousness that his religion was only tolerated, and that the Great Charter of Nantes might one day be revoked, as afterwards happened, gave to the thriving Calvinist of France habits of reflection, self-reliance, and thrift, which marked him amid the throng of his fellow-countrymen.

At Vervins, meanwhile, the negotiations were progressing. The ability, patience, and discretion of the cardinal-legate de Medici soothed national jealousies; and suggested a method of honourable extrication from most difficulties. The first conference of the plenipotentiaries was holden at the beginning of February; and by the wise arrangement of the legate no contest for precedency arose. The order of the august assemblage was thus arranged: the cardinal occupied an elevated seat

under a canopy placed in the centre of the hall of conference. The nuncio-bishop of Mantua sat on the right of the legate; and next to him was Richardot president of the Flemish council, de Taxis conde de Villamediana, and the treasurer Louis Verreyken. On the left of the legate sat M. de Bellièvre—the dignity of France being vindicated by her principal envoy taking place next to the cardinal; whereas the nuncio Gonzaga divided his eminence from Philip's chief ambassador, Richardot.[1] Calatagirone and the marquis de Lullin, ambassador of the duke de Savoy, took place *vis-à-vis* to the chair of the legate. The entire months of February, March, and part of April, were consumed in quibbles between the powers. The duke of Savoy refused to renounce his pretensions to Saluzzo—though willing to surrender the little town of Berres in Provence, the only place left to the duke by his majesty's active lieutenants, the duke de Guise and Lesdiguières.

The legate at length proposed that the affair of Saluzzo should be referred to the mediation of the pope, whose decision was to be made known within a year after signing the treaty: meantime, that the duke of Savoy should resign any conquests or spoils captured on French territory; and restore the artillery and ammunition carried from his majesty's forts of Provence, on condition that peace was concluded between his Christian majesty and Savoy. The compromise was accepted by the duke, who found his military resources failing; and who hoped to see his tenure of Saluzzo confirmed by separate treaty with the king, through the mediation of madame de Beau-

[1] Negotiations de la Paix traitée à Vervins. De Thou. Tortora, Cayet, Péréfixe, and others.

fort, by the offer of the investiture of the marquisate, under the tenure of the ducal crown, for her new-born son. This difficulty surmounted, and after the arrival of a distinct refusal from the queen of England and the States of Holland to be comprehended in the pending treaty, the following articles were resolved, and accepted by the French and Spanish plenipotentiaries, on the 2d day of May:—"Perpetual peace is to be proclaimed between the subjects of their Christian and Catholic majesties: the subjects of either state to enjoy reciprocal advantages within the realms of France and Spain: that the monarchs resolve to restore the conquests made in each other's territories —the king of Spain relinquishing the towns of Calais, Ardres, Monthulin, Dourlens, Capelle, and Câtelet: his Catholic majesty also covenanting to restore the port of Blavet in Bretagne within two months; and meantime, to give six hostages for the performance of this condition. The king of France, on his side, shall cede the country of Charolois—the district of Cambray to be regarded as neutral territory, under the protectorate of Spain, as before its capture in 1558, by the late duke d'Alençon." All the potentates of Europe, excepting the queen of England and the Stadtholder of Holland, were included in the treaty, as friends and allies of one or other of the contracting potentates.[1] Such were the stipulations of the famous Treaty of Vervins, which closed one of the most sanguinary civil wars recorded in history. The advantages stipulated were on the side of Henri Quatre—for the Spaniards simply covenanted to cede their conquests, and evacuate the realm of France: their sole

[1] De Thou, liv. 120. Davila, liv. 15. Sully, liv. 9ème. MS. Supplement de Journal d'Estoile—Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. f. 1644. Negotiations de la Paix traitée à Vervins, t. 2.

compensation for so vast an outpouring of blood and treasure being the renunciation of the recent claim of France on the Cambresis; and the restoration of the country of Charolais to the future dominion of the Infanta. "By the stroke of a pen," exclaimed Henry, enthusiastically, "I have conquered more towns than I could have captured with the best swords of my realm, in a long campaign!" This triumph the king owed to his personal qualities and vigorous prowess,[1] and to the high opinion which Philip II. had conceived of his energy. Philip, it was true, had potent motives to conclude a peace; but to resign what he could not long keep was perhaps no great sign of magnanimity.

The king received the news of the conclusion of the treaty at Fontaine, on his road to Rennes, where M. de Rosny had been for some ten days occupied in taking a financial survey of the new resources opened by the duchy. The king's joy was extreme—and he immediately wrote to the cardinal-legate, and to his holiness, to express his gratitude for their mediation. "The sword of Charlemagne, sire, has won the crown of St. Louis," was the delicate compliment of the duchess de Beaufort to "her hero." The king approved of the acts of his own faithful subjects—Bellièvre, Sillery, and Villeroy, to whom he addressed an epistle of thanks. His majesty also notified his satisfaction at the choice of ambassadors, who, on behalf of his Catholic majesty, were immediately to repair

[1] "Rien ne conserve l'autorité des princes que la reputation, spécialment en ce royaume composé de noblesse qui fait profession d'honneur, et de répandre son sang pour en acquerir. Mon epée, et ma foi, et mes alliés après la grace de Dieu, m'ont remis la couronne sur la tête que mes ennemis avoient fort ebranlée!" This striking passage is found in a holograph letter written by king Henry to cardinal d'Ossat. Lettre 101.

to Paris, to witness his solemn ratification of the treaty. The hostages given by the king of Spain, in pledge of the speedy surrender of Blavet, were to be conducted by Montmorency to Compiègne, where Madame was sojourning in disconsolate solitude. A fragment of a letter remains, addressed by Henry at this season to his ambassador in Rome: "They (the Spaniards) will relinquish all my places. Calais first, and Blavet last. I do not expend a crown for the said towns, as indemnification for the vast fortifications constructed — the enemy, however, reserves power to transport away his artillery and ammunition. If his holiness believes in my sincerity, he must allow me to navigate this vessel, if he desires that it should reach haven, for the welfare of the church and of this realm."[1] A letter was also despatched to queen Elizabeth, who had sent Sir Thomas Edmunds with a furious epistle, in which her majesty reproaches the king, not that he had concluded peace, but that he had permitted his plenipotentiaries to sign the treaty, without previously giving her full forty days' notice of such intention. Elizabeth had all along flattered herself that some obstacle would arise to dissipate the pacific resolves of the courts of France, Spain, and Savoy. "Madame ma bonne Sœur.[2]—I have listened to the complaints which you commanded Edmunds to impart, and have also perused your letter, all which I intend to take patiently, remembering eternally the kindness and obligations which I have received from you. Madame, you cannot accuse me of acting deceitfully, or of having done anything without your previous knowledge. I not only besought you to act with me; but, moreover, I opened

[1] Hist. du cardinal de Joyeuse, in 4to., 1654, chez Denain.
[2] MS. Cotton. Caligula, E. ix., fol. 355.

to you a sure path to success, had you condescended to listen to my counsel. Therefore, it is not I who abandon you, but you who abandon me. I had no other course than that which I adopted; the welfare and necessity of this kingdom were duties which I dared not disregard before God. Believe that if I could have retarded the period fixed by my deputies to tender their signatures, I would have done so to obey you: but when your letter arrived I had it no longer in my power. Madame, you must advise what I can now do to pleasure you, and to contribute to your comfort and repose: and I pray you to credit me in this, that my anxiety to serve you is as great as my affection and gratitude." The king's letter is throughout temperate and humble in its expostulation at Elizabeth's unreasonable anger; but for long the queen, incensed at what she termed her abandonment by king Henry, refused to be propitiated.

During his sojourn at Rennes, Henry first made confidence to his faithful Rosny of his desire to espouse his mistress; and moreover, announced his resolve to permit no obstacle to divert him from that purpose. Henry had purposely waited for the pacification of France to declare his project. He now beheld himself king, absolute as Francis I. The realm was at peace, and the Huguenots bound by the strongest of ties—that of self-interest—to his crown. The pope was conciliatory, and anxious to consolidate his growing influence; the nobles, impoverished by the war, sought to repair their fortunes by diligent court to their sovereign; the parliament and judicial courts, daunted by the royal vigour and fortune, were obsequious; the people, exhausted and impoverished by anarchy, essayed to improve their condition, by attending every man to his calling, leaving the ad-

justment of affairs to the strong hand of "*leur brave roi!*" To Rosny, therefore, the king first confessed the secret of his heart. Henry's custom, when making confidences to Rosny, was to watch the quaint countenance of his faithful minister, who often interrupted his majesty's gushing sentiment by dry matter of fact comments. In this case Henry took an unusually circuitous road, dreading the effect of his avowal on the nerves of the austere Rosny. The place of conference chosen by the king was the beautiful plaisaunce then attached to the palace of the ancient dukes of Bretagne at Rennes. "His majesty met me one day in the courtyard, and taking my hand, intwined his fingers within mine, and leading me into a beautiful garden, he caused the door to be closed, and ordered that no one should enter." The conversation for some time was confined to politics; the king then alluded to his divorce, and expressed a wish that, amid his present triumphs, he had been blessed with a legitimate heir. Rosny slyly insinuates that he divined the drift of the royal observations, having observed the very pensive manner of his majesty for some days past; and the warmth of his allusions to madame la Duchesse, whose health had compelled her to remain at Nantes. Henry next began to review and criticise the merits of the princesses of Europe, whose future alliance might be deemed eligible. He announced that in the choice of a consort he should deem seven things indispensable: to wit—Beauty, prudence, gentleness, wit, fecundity, riches, and royal extraction. "I would not reject the hand of the Infanta of Spain, provided that with her I might espouse the Netherlands. I would not even refuse the princess Arabella of England, if, as it is reported, that crown apper-

tains to her, and she were declared its heiress presumptive. I have been informed that there are some German princesses who might suit me. I do not fancy any one of them; and should always imagine that I had a skin of wine by my side; moreover, there has already been a queen of France of that nation, who nearly ruined us all.[1] Prince Maurice, I hear, has sisters; but they are Huguenots, and such an alliance would offend the court of Rome: besides, these princesses are the daughters of a nun.[2] The duke of Florence has also a niece,[3] who is reputed beautiful; but she is of the smallest reigning house in Christendom; her ancestors, only eighty years ago, being chief burghers of their town: she is moreover of the same race as the late queen-mother Catherine, who did such harm to France, and injury to myself especially." The king continued to run on in this strain, depreciating and proving impossible his alliance with any European princess. He next reviewed the ladies of France. "As for my niece of Guise, I admire her most, despite the rumours which some malicious tongues spread, that she prefers rather *les poulets en papier, qu'en fricassée.* Nevertheless, I should prefer a flirting wife rather than an ill-tempered one; but I apprehend that the said lady is too ardent for the glory of her house and the prosperity of MM. her brothers." Henry next mentioned the daughters of M. de Mayenne, but found fault with their complexion—the eldest of

[1] Isabelle de Bavière, consort of Charles VI.

[2] Of Charlotte de Bourbon Montpensier, abbess of Jonarre, who, fleeing from her convent, afterwards espoused William de Nassau the great Prince of Orange.

[3] Marie de Medici, queen of France elect in the mind and will of M. de Rosny.

these princesses however eventually became the object of the king's passionate admiration.[1] The three princesses of Longueville the king said were too young; mademoiselle de Rohan was a Huguenot; and mesdemoiselles de Lucé and de Luxembourg not at all to his taste. His majesty then condescended to explain the reason which rendered him so scrupulous: he stated that he wanted a wife to confide in; and to whom he could leave the regency of the realm in case of his own death. "Sire!" at length responded Rosny gravely, "I am afflicted beyond measure! What can I say? You wish to be married again, and the world it seems does not contain a suitable princess! From what you said respecting the Infanta Doña Isabel Clara, it appears to me that you require a rich heiress. Where can you find such? Do you expect a miracle, that heaven will raise up for you a Marguerite of Flanders, a Marie de Bourgogne, a Marie Stuart, or that the queen of England will be rejuvenated? I counsel you, therefore, to assemble the most lovely damsels of France, and thus choose a consort to your taste." Rosny then, in more serious tone, remarked that he thought Henry might dispense with an heiress; or from asking regal birth for his consort: for that it sufficed if his majesty could find a princess likely to make him happy; and to give plenty of children to France. "True, *mon ami*," rejoined Henry; "but as you agree that my future wife must be amiable, handsome, and likely to have children, reflect if you do not already know a lady who would answer these requirements?" Rosny demurely responded that he did not. "What then if I should name her; and avow that I am able to testify to the beauty, amia-

[1] She espoused the young duke de Nevers.

bility, and fecundity of the said lady?" "Sire, I should say that you are more intimate with the said lady than myself. Your majesty, doubtless, alludes to some royal widow. Name the lady, therefore, sire." "Oh! you cunning fool!" retorted his majesty; "you know well to whom I allude. Confess, therefore, that my three conditions of beauty, amiability, and fecundity, are realised by my mistress, madame la Duchesse! I wish to hear what objections you have to offer, if some day I resolve to espouse her?" Upon this Rosny put on his most gloomy and uninviting manner, and begged to be excused from answering the royal query. "But I order you to answer—you have the right to speak the truth of me, whatever it may be," said the king. Thus adjured, Rosny pointed out the infinite evil which must occur from the king's marriage with madame la Duchesse. He especially dwelt on the civil war which, on his majesty's demise, would doubtlessly ensue between his legitimate sons and the children born before the marriage of their mother: that the ladies of France would not willingly pay homage to madame Gabrielle; while still greater would be the disinclination manifested by foreign potentates to accord to her queenly honours. That feuds and jealousies must destroy the harmony of the royal family; until his majesty himself would be the first to deplore the fatal infatuation which had induced him to convert his mistress into his legitimate wife. Henry listened, and was silenced, though not convinced. He promised, however, to take no definite resolve, until his divorce with queen Marguerite should be accomplished. He commanded Rosny to resume his negotiation with her majesty; and stated that it was his intention to despatch an

envoy to Rome to solicit his holiness on the matter immediately after his return to Paris. "I saw," writes Rosny, "that the king was irrevocably stricken." Henry promised not to impart the conversation to the duchess, "because she likes you, Rosny, and esteems you. She, nevertheless, rather distrusts the counsel you give me, as being adverse to herself and to her children. She often says that, to hear you speak, it might be imagined that you prefer my realm to my person; and provide for my glory, rather than for my happiness." Rosny replied that he could not deny the imputation: "Sire, your virtue and your great mind animate your realm—the splendour and glory of this kingdom should suffice to recompense you for all sacrifices!" The conference lasted three hours; the king departed anxious, but not the least diverted from the resolve which he had so long cherished: Rosny retired sorrowful, and anticipating disastrous results from the infatuation of the king.

In the plenitude of his victories and his power, Henry imagined that his will could elevate Gabrielle d'Estrées to the throne; and, blinded by her ambition, the duchess used the unbounded influence which she possessed over the king to strengthen this determination. The careless indifference with which the rumours, long pervading the court, had been treated, fatally deluded madame de Beaufort: the project, however, was not credited—or, at any rate, it was deemed more politic to wait until facts confirmed the reports, before opposition was manifested. Yet the manner of Gabrielle's friends and adherents, when the secret was intrusted to them, might have warned the duchess. Cheverny suggested delay and circumspection; Sancy, by the bitterness of the

censure which his impetuous nature could not repress, had forfeited at once the favour of the duchess; Roquelaure incurred temporary disgrace by the obscene jest he thereupon uttered in the presence of Angelique d'Estrées, abbess of Maubuisson, and which the latter repeated to her sister. Du Perron penned verses in which his semi-satirical allusions while lauding the future royal state of the favourite, rendered madame de Beaufort doubtful whether to frown or to commend. The duke de Mayenne, with his phlegmatic though positive temper, did much to encourage the hopes of the duchess; but Mayenne had a place to win at court; an influence to establish in the council; wealthy alliances to negotiate for his daughters—in all which the promised aid of madame Gabrielle was, in fact, the accomplishment of the duke's designs. Queen Marguerite faithfully interpreted the sentiment of Henry's courtiers, when she averred that the nobles and ladies of France would rather incline before herself, all sullied and ruined as was her repute, than accept the sovereignty of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Unhappily, the duchess heeded not the indications of the coming storm: she forgot that there were those at court—men of strong political passions, inured in crime—who would remorselessly strike to the ground her loveliness and grace, like any noxious thing fatal to the glory of their royal master, or to the welfare of his realm.

The king made sojourn of eight days only in Rennes. His majesty journeyed to La Flêche, and from thence visited Compiègne, where his sister was sojourning. The king found that the humour, or depression of madame Catherine was not cheered by the presence of the gallant young Spanish

cavaliers, Philip's hostages.[1] Madame was still dissatisfied at her intended alliance with the duke de Bar; and pined for "her count," who had again offended the king by supercilious neglect. The princess was also dissatisfied at the partition made of the effects of queen Jeanne d'Albert between herself and her brother. A few weeks later Henry wrote the following angry letter to M. Caumont de la Force, superintendent of the royal domains in Béarn, in which he makes sore complaint of Madame's fretful discontent:—

The King to M. de Caumont.[2]

"MONS. DE CAUMONT—My sister remains in as bad a humour as she displayed when we were at Compiègne: which is to me an insupportable infliction. I therefore hasten as fast as I can to get her married, and so to add this blessing to the many which God has bestowed upon me, in giving peace to this realm and to the reformed churches. She now wishes to have the furniture and moveables which I possess in the castles of Pau, Navarreins, and Nérac; and that without so much as asking my consent, though I have presented to her all the furniture in my castle of Vendôme, amongst which there were valuable effects. I, therefore, pray you to have inventories taken of the furniture in the said castles; and to send the list to me by a messenger, without imparting this demand I make to anyone. I believe that this torment has been sent, after so many benedictions, to dissipate undue elation. A Dieu, *mon amy*.—This 18th of June, at Paris."

[1] The cavaliers were, Charles de Croy, duc d'Arscot, Francisco de Mendoza admiral of Arragon, Charles de Ligne count d'Aremberg, Louis de Valesco, son of the constable of Castile duque de Frias.

[2] Egerton Papers—B. Museum, fol. 74, vol. 5.

The dispute between the king and his sister had been provoked by discussions relative to the drawing of Madame's marriage contract with M. de Bar. Every obstacle possible was interposed by Madame —who declared that she could not legally espouse any prince professing the orthodox faith, as his holiness would refuse to grant dispensation. The king retorted, by asking Madame whether that obstacle was not also conclusive against her union with M. de Soissons?—adding, that the abjuration which she had rebelliously tendered to his holiness, to purchase the intervention of the holy see to bring about that marriage, she might again proffer in favour of M. de Bar, at the command of her brother and king.[1] These unfortunate broils were of daily occurrence until the departure of the court for Paris. If Madame was captious and irritable, Henry was often inconsiderate and harsh in his dealings with his sister; and frequently angered her unnecessarily by appeals to madame la Duchesse in their daily bickerings. The latter was accused of hostile feelings towards Madame; and of having urged in an unseemly manner an alliance hateful to the princess. The king, however, could never endure peremptory opposition from women: nevertheless, if they condescended to flatter and entreat with submissive wiles

[1] Queen Jeanne d'Albret, in her will, entreated her son, Henry IV., to "love and cherish his sister Catherine, to protect her from evil, and, finally, to bestow her in marriage on a prince professing the same religion as herself."—Life of Jeanne d'Albret queen of Navarre, vol. 2, p. 345. The events of the education and early youth of Henry IV., which exercised such signal influence over the future policy of the king, have been related by the author in this work, of which a second and revised edition is about to be added to the Standard Library published by Messrs. Hurst and Blackett.

he became their slave—hence arose the unequalled power of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Madame saw the right, and obeyed, as she believed, its dictates: but she disdained to gild an unpleasant truth by arts and sophistry; or to wear the mask of content when her heart throbbed with anger. A noble generosity also had its influence over Madame; though her anger was swift, and subjected her by its vehemence to hear language harsher than often met the ear of a princess, she invariably forgave, and never harboured malice against the offender. Madame loved melancholy and solitude, such as surrounded her during the first twenty-five years of her life. She delighted to dogmatize with her ministers; and to hold discourses with her ladies on the leading topics of "Calvin's Institutes"—a book which Madame venerated second in degree only to her Bible. The abjuration of the king had distracted her; and she was daily agonized by forebodings of the perdition to which she believed his lawless love doomed him.

On the 1st of June the king arrived at St. Germain, en Laye, for the festivities which were to inaugurate the ratification of the peace. Madame repaired to her hôtel in Paris. The following day a *prêche* was holden by command of the princess in the courtyard attached to her apartments at the Louvre, at which 3,000 persons were present. The 24th psalm was sung with unction. This demonstration highly displeased his majesty; who reproached Madame for trespassing on his indulgence at this season. On the 12th of June solemn proclamation was made of the peace in the Palais, by royal trumpeters and heralds. In the evening the city was illuminated; a banquet given at the Louvre; and *largesse* distributed. Four days subsequently, the legate made his

pompous entry into the capital, borne in a litter draped with crimson satin. His eminence was preceded by one of his chaplains on foot, holding aloft a silver crucifix. The reception of the cardinal was enthusiastic; his moderation, and gentle manners, were appreciated; so the cry, "Vive l'illustrissime cardinal de Florence!" echoed, as the cortége, consisting of 42 coaches, passed on to the Louvre. The hôtel de Schomberg, meantime, was abandoned by madame de Beaufort for the Louvre; and every personage admitted to audience of the king, passed from the royal cabinet to salute the duchess. The state of a queen was now openly assigned to Gabrielle; no personage after the return of the court to Paris was admitted to her presence without having first made formal application for audience. In the receptions at the Louvre she occupied a *fauteuil* next to that of the king; and never rose to return the salutations even of princesses of the blood. Chamberlains preceded her when she entered or quitted the royal saloon; and the challenge—"Place! Place! pour madame la Duchesse!" was raised in the ear of majesty. The *levées* of the duchess were now ceremoniously attended; and the greatest ladies contended for the honour of handing her Hours, or her *sale*,[1] to madame la Duchesse. "Certes," says a contemporary, "no one can gaze without vivid admiration on the lovely duchesse, and on her beautiful children. The king our sire cannot hold his eyes from contemplation; for the name of Gabrielle d'Estrées will remain ever on record as the synonym of 'perfect beauty.'"

[1] The *sale* was a platter of porcelain, or often of gold, upon which the rings, fan, handkerchief, and watch of the queen were handed to her by the lady of highest rank present.

On Thursday, June 18th, the Spanish ambassadors entered Paris to witness the signature of the treaty by the king; and to testify to his oath of ratification. The cavaliers were the duke d'Arscot, the count d'Aremberg, Don Francisco de Mendoza admiral of Aragon, Richardot president of the Flemish council, Don Louis de Velasco, and Louis de Vereyken. The ambassadors were met at the Porte St. Denis and escorted into Paris by the count de St. Paul, accompanied by the marquis d'Estrées, and a brilliant throng of the *élite* of the French nobility. The same evening the municipality of Paris waited on the ambassadors, and presented an offering of sweetmeats and hypocras—a courteous attention acknowledged by the duke d'Arscot.

The next day the ambassage proceeded in state to the Louvre, where Henry received the cavaliers on the throne, surrounded by the magnificent *appareil* of French royalty. His majesty wore a suit of black velvet and a ruff of Venice point. The king gave hearty greeting to the envoys; with more *empressement* of manner than was approved by the cavaliers and ladies of the stately court of Henri III. The *bon mot* of madame de Rohan found much favour with these personages, who, when asked if she had lately seen the king, replied, "Oui, j'ai vu le roi—mais non sa Majesté." The president de Richardot spoke the harangue, which was briefly responded to by king Henry. The king then conversed with the cavaliers, and suffered the duke d'Arscot to present to him the soldier who dropped the bag of walnuts at the gate of Amiens on the capture of that town, as a decoy to the sentinels on guard.[1]

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. Supplement du Journal de Lestoile—Suppl. Fr. fol. 1644. "Le roy fit approcher le soldat, et lui demande,

The king then asked the cavaliers to accompany him to the tennis-court, where he was going to challenge the prince de Joinville to a trial of skill. In the little gallery overlooking the court were many ladies veiled—including the duchesse de Beaufort, mademoiselle de Guise, the duchess de Mayenne, and others. The king sent a chamberlain to request madame la Duchesse to lay aside her veil, so that the Spanish hidalgos might make her obeisance. The next day Henry took his illustrious guests to St. Germain, when a grand hunt ensued. This pastime was not so much to the taste of the Spaniards as the banquets and balls of the Louvre: the more elderly cavaliers complained of fatigue, and expressed their astonishment at the activity of king Henry.

On Sunday the 20th of June, a grand religious ceremony at Notre Dame was solemnized. The king went from the Louvre to the cathedral, followed by a suite of 600 gentlemen. Around the royal person were the dukes de Montpensier, Nemours, Nevers, Joinville, and Epernon, the counts de Sommerive, d'Auvergne, and de Biron—for whom the king had signed a patent of duke and peer, which wanted but the registration of the parliament. Within the cathedral three canopies of state were erected in front of the high altar. The king took his seat under the centre canopy; and at the conclusion of mass the chair to the right was occupied by the cardinal legate; and the one to the left by the duke d'Arscot, behind whom the Spanish hidalgos grouped

Combien les noix? et qu'il les lui avoit vendu bien cher." Sur quoi l'autre voulant entrer aux excuses, le roy l'interrompant lui dit. "Qu'il lui en savoit bon grè; et qu'il l'en aimoit mieux, voir qu'il eust desiré avoir en son royaume beaucoup de tels serviteurs!"

themselves. The king then commanded Villeroy to read aloud the treaty concluded at Vervins. This being done, the king rose, and, approaching the altar, took oath on the Gospels to observe its stipulations; the formula being administered by the legate, who presented his majesty with a pen to sign the document; which was spread before him by his eminence, and the chancellor de Cheverny. Largesse was bountifully distributed. The king and his illustrious *entourage* then repaired to the banqueting hall of the episcopal palace, where high revel ensued. At the refection of fruit, wine, and pastry, the ladies of the court appeared. When madame la Duchesse entered, the king rose to greet her—an example followed by the entire assemblage. She was attended by the duchesse de Guise, who, though the grand-daughter of Louis XII., disdained not to fill the functions of lady of honour, on this public occasion, to madame Gabrielle. "Madame de Guise served madame la duchesse de Beaufort, and presented to her the dishes in turn, making low obeisances. The duchess sat daintily in her chair, helping herself with one hand to the sweetmeats to her taste, and suffering his majesty to fondle the other."[1] Madame was not present; being either too angry or too indifferent to mingle in any of the rejoicings for the restoration of peace. Banquets, hunting-parties, and balls continued during the following week to regale the ambassadors. The duke d'Arscot, who had not visited Paris since he made his entry with the duke of Parma, after the raising of the great siege of the capital, complimented his majesty on the renovation of the public buildings; and the com-

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. Supplement de Journal de Lestoile—Suppl. fr. 1644.

parative present prosperity of the citizens. "You are right, mon cousin; my city was then in the power of rogues and varlets! Now it has returned under the jurisdiction of its master and king!" On Midsummer eve the municipality offered a banquet to the king and his guests. At nightfall, in a huge fire kindled opposite the Hôtel de Ville, an effigy of the god Mars was consumed, the torch being applied to the pyre by the hand of the king. Simultaneously the façade of the Hôtel blazed with lights: along the cornices of the edifice clusters of warlike weapons had been ranged, carved in thin wood, which were gradually consumed by the flame of the illuminations. Henry drank the health of his Catholic majesty with great cordialty: "May my good brother the Catholic king enjoy a long life, and taste the joy of this our glorious peace!"

On the 1st of July the marshal duke de Biron,[1] M. de Bellièvre, and M. de Sillery departed for Brussels; where, on the 12th of the same month, the ceremony of confirming the peace by oath and signature was likewise performed by the archduke on behalf of Philip II., in the cathedral of Ste. Gudule. The archduke presented costly gifts to the envoys; and appeared especially delighted with the animated deportment of M. de Biron. Albert presented the latter with two fine horses, a gold vase, a silver basin, twenty pairs of gloves, a standard, a heron's plume, and a magnificent jewel-hilted sword. To M. de Bellièvre the archduke gave a set of tapestry hangings and a gold chain: and to each gentleman in the suite of the ambassadors, a sword and a pair of gloves. The king also sent M. de Bothion to the duke of Savoy. The peace was also signed at Madrid by

[1] The date of Biron's patent is the 28th of June, 1598.

his Catholic majesty, on the 12th of July — the treaty being almost the last state paper which bears the redoubtable *Yo el Rey* of Philip II. The king, at the suit of the cavaliers, hostages for Philip's punctual fulfilment of the treaty, generously gave them permission to leave the realm, on receiving the promise of the noblemen that they would return and deliver themselves up, in case obstacles were purposely interposed to retard the disarmment. The ambassage thereupon took leave of the king, who was not sorry to say farewell; as the expense of the daily entertainment of the cavaliers was great.[1]

The king then made a short sojourn at St. Germain, where news reached him of the amicable arrangement concluded between the grand-duke of Tuscany and M. d'Ossat, relative to the restoration of the islets d'If and de Pomegues; which, during the civil war in Provence, the duke seized as a guarantee for the repayment of the two millions of crowns which he had lent to his majesty. The duke restored the islands; and though Henry was not able to lay down the sum advanced, declined handsomely to accept a bond for its repayment, declaring that he trusted to his majesty's well recognized honour. This confidence so gratified the king, that it induced his majesty hereafter to overlook the fact, "that the niece of the duke de Florence was of the most insignificant royal house of Europe."

[1] "Sur la fin de ce mois les Espagnols demandèrent congé au roy de reprendre le chemin de leur pays, ce le roy de son côté les souhaitait il y avoit longtemps. Les plus grossiers d'entre eux, las de veiller en exercise qu'on leur avoit fait faire, disoient, 'Que c'etoit un mauvais pays que la France, et qu'on n'y pouvait dormir.'"—MS. Supplement de Journal de Lestoile. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. f. 1644.

Whilst at St. Germain Henry again took counsel on the affair nearest to his heart—his marriage with Gabrielle d'Estrées. The king summoned Villeroy, who then was first officially initiated by his majesty, Rosny, and Sillery—the latter being the friend and protegé of the duchess. M. de Rosny repeated the advice before given to the king. Villeroy, "who always found a way to please both parties," counselled his royal master "not to marry his mistress—a determination fraught with perils and provocations of no slight description—but to refrain from seeking a divorce; and to acknowledge the young Condé as his legitimate successor." M. de Sillery angrily combated these counsels. Gabrielle, the future queen, had promised him immediate possession of the great seal, with the dignity of chancellor of France, on the demise of Cheverny. He therefore pressed the king to keep the word he had given to madame la Duchesse, to espouse that lady; and to persuade or coerce the pope into declaring the birth of César Monsieur legitimate—on the ground that Henry, from the commencement of his *liaison* with madame Gabrielle, had in his heart and conscience regarded her as his wife. The marriage of the duchess to M. de Liancour, Sillery remarked, had been merely a form; for that Gabrielle never quitted the society of her aunt, madame de Sourdis, from the period that ceremony was performed in the château of Cœuvres, until three days afterwards, when she greeted his majesty in the camp of Chauny. Henry listened: "Messieurs, I had hoped to be aided in the elucidation of my difficulty by your good counsels; nevertheless, the diversity of your opinions, each supported by reasons so powerful, has increased my dilemma. I will, therefore, take a longer period to decide:

nevertheless, M. de Sillery, prepare for your mission to Rome."[1] These preparations were continued, according to the king's command, with alacrity. The duchess herself superintended the choice of the equipages of the ambassador, and conferred with him frequently in private. In order to render the favour of Sillery the more conspicuous, by contrast with the disgrace of her old ally Sancy, the duchess, by her representations, so increased the displeasure of his majesty at the freedom of speech in which the latter indulged, that Henry again held two privy-councils without causing him to be summoned. With his accustomed impetuosity, Sancy first vented his wrath by comments more galling than ever on the conduct of madame la Duchesse; and then again quitted the court.

The royal attention during this interval was also occupied with the drawing of the articles of Madame's marriage contract with the duke de Bar. The princess had lately ceased from offering more than passive resistance to the will of her brother. Madame believed that no papal dispensation could be obtained: indeed, the solicitations of the duke de Lorraine had hitherto failed to move the resolve of pope Clement. The duke made application through d'Ossat, by one colonel Orfeo. The cardinal replied, that such request could not be granted; as the pope already had declared that he would give dispensation only on the abjuration of the princess. "If my said

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp., vol. 9590. B. Museum—MS. King's Library, 272 B.—Lettre ecrite par le cardinal de Givry, avec un discours fors curieux envoyé au dit cardinal d'un conseil tenu à St. Germain en 1598 par le roi Henri IV. sur le sujet du mariage pretendu de madame la duchesse de Beaufort avec sa majesté—fol. 3.

prince does not soon propose to marry madame Catherine, the king will make war on M. de Lorraine: the pope must take such casualty into consideration," retorted Orfeo. According to the duke de Piney Luxembourg, however, all the solicitation in the matter of the marriage of Madame resulted from the importunities of the princes of Lorraine. The duke of Lorraine ardently desired that the fraternal bond with France, which during the late reign had been so profitable to the duchy, should be renewed. The duke de Bar professed himself a devoted admirer of the princess; and prayed the king not to suffer the papal interdict to bar their union. "The man, sire, who marries a heretic, with the intent of persuading her to his faith, acquires mental dispensation." The duke of Lorraine, moreover, supported his son's proposal, that Madame should be first married, and then converted:—"The abjuration which Madame offered for licence to espouse M. de Soissons she will not long withhold should maternal ties supervene, and her heresy renders doubtful the legitimacy of her offspring," argued the duke.[1] Henry required little persuasion to induce him to provide his sister with a sphere of her own, distinct from his court. Her passionate temper, for which his majesty had no tolerance; her often ill-judged displays of Calvinistic zeal in the Louvre itself; and the disdain Madame evinced for Gabrielle d'Estrées, were motives which induced the king selfishly to hail a project that promised him a solution of his difficulties. Madame, however, with her true and generous heart, imagined not that her

[1] Lettres du cardinal d'Ossat, lettre 146. Lettres du duc de Luxembourg au Roi MS. Bibl. Imp. Dupuy, 212, lettre du 16 Fev., 1598.

brother could acquiesce in a marriage, which, solemnized in defiance of the papal veto, could not be deemed valid by her future husband, or by his subjects; and which, at any moment, might render her repudiation possible, and brand her children as illegitimate! Moreover, the king, on this very ground —the absence of papal dispensation in his own case— was about to demand from Rome the dissolution of his marriage with Marguerite de Valois! The king, however, was always pleased to express his belief that Madame would finally abjure the reformed faith— thus excusing his arbitrary fiat; while he averred that in establishing his sister in Lorraine, he secured for her position and wealth, such as the late queen-mother had accepted for her second daughter, mother of the duke de Bar. Rosny, therefore, was authorized by the king to draw up the marriage articles during the month of August, 1598. An annual revenue of 60,000 livres was settled by the king on his sister. Madame had, moreover, a sum of 100,000 crowns in ready money; a superb toilette of gold plate; and a quantity of valuable jewels bequeathed by queen Jéanne d'Albret to her daughter, which included a grand *parure* of emeralds, a pearl necklace, and a tiara of diamonds.[1] The princess also obtained the rich furniture which she had so uncere-

[1] These jewels, with others, had been pledged by queen Jeanne d'Albret to her friend and ally, Elizabeth queen of England, for the sum of 300,000 crowns. See "Life of Jeanne d'Albret queen of Navarre, mother of Henri Quatre." The king redeemed, according to his mother's will, these jewels, of which he retained as heir-looms a diamond necklace and a ruby ring, both of considerable value. Madame had a great passion for jewels—all her portraits represent her as attired with the utmost magnificence and taste.

moniously claimed from her brother. The contract was signed by the king at Monceaux, where his majesty was sojourning with madame la Duchesse and his children. The princess seems to have so far overcome her prejudice against madame de Beaufort as to join the king at Monceaux, to discuss the articles of her marriage contract. The visit of the princess softened her feelings towards the duchess, as from thenceforth her intercourse with the latter seems more cordial; so much so, that a few weeks later Gabrielle actually quitted Monceaux, during the sojourn there of the king, to console Madame at St. Germain, under the discomposure of an unexpected and sudden visit from her *fiancé*, M. de Bar.

END OF VOL. I.

R. BORN, PRINTER, GLOUCESTER STREET, REGENT'S PARK.

00036983

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018